

Issue 202

27 January 1996

CBW

Coach and Bus V

The PSV industry's new



HARDY HYBRID

Volvo concept put through its paces



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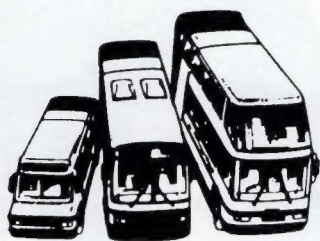
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Fresh premises and four new coaches **Page 38**



The Birmingham Coach Company

1980 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON SUPREME Mk IV, 57 seater,
Reg. No. NEH 103V, tested until 4/96, retrimmed last year£10,500

1980 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON SUPREME Mk IV, 57 seater,
Reg. No. NEH 104V, new test until 2/97£11,000

1985 NEOPLAN, 77 seater, full executive, Reg. No. JDZ 4898,
tested until 16/5/96, new engine/diff/gearbox, very good condition
.....£45,000

VOLVO B10M, VAN HOOL ALIZEE, Reg. No. SIB 8342, 49 seater,
full executive, centre sunken toilet/washroom, video, fridge,
drinks facility, air conditioning, very good condition,
tested until 16/12/96£57,000

1977 LEYLAND LEOPARD, PLAXTON SUPREME, Mk IV front,
53 seater, power door, radio, good contract vehicle,
tested until 10/10/96£4,000

All prices plus VAT and tyres

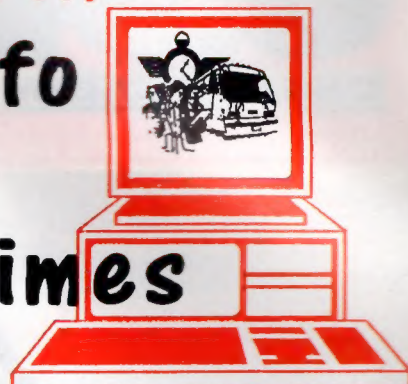
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**PARTS STOCKISTS:
BOVA, VAN HOOL
TOYOTA OPTIMO**

1994 (September) MAN 11.190 CAETANO ALGARVE II

35 recliners, grey/red/blue moquette,
double glazed tinted side windows,
curtains, courier seat, continental door,
power entrance door, finished duo blue.
M.O.T. AUGUST 1996

1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M

49/53 recliners, centre sunken
demountable toilet, continental door,
double glazed tinted side windows with
roller blinds, wired TV/video, finished white.
M.O.T. OCTOBER 1996

1993 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 350 12M

53 recliners, red/black stripe moquette,
rear continental door, double glazed tinted
side windows, courier seat, power entrance
door, finished white/orange.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1991 (AUGUST) LEYLAND SWIFT REEVE BURGESS HARRIER

37 seats, brown/orange moquette, power
entrance door, finished white.
M.O.T. JULY 1996

1991 TOYOTA CAETANO OPTIMO

21 seats, brown moquette, courier seat,
curtains, power entrance door, speed
limiter, finished white/green/gold.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1990 DAF SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE-DH 12M

51/53 recliners, re-trimmed brown graffiti
moquette, centre sunken demountable
toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted
windows, curtains, courier seat, provision
for driver's berth, water boiler, wired
TV/video, low driving position, finished
cream/brown.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

1990 TOYOTA CAETANO OPTIMO

21 seats, brown/fawn moquette, courier
seat, curtains, power entrance door,
finished white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1996

NEW for '96

VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE

VOLVO B9M VAN HOOL ALIZEE

BOVA FUTURA FHD 12 330

BOVA FUTURA FLD 12 270

BOVA FUTURA FLC 12 275

*Discuss your
requirements now!*

1989 (August) LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLÉ 320 12M

53 recliners, brown/orange moquette,
double glazed tinted side windows,
pull-down blinds, power entrance door,
TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished
all white.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1989 (October) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

51 recliners, beige/brown/orange moquette,
courier seat, centre sunken toilet,
continental door, double glazed
windows, curtains, water boiler,
entrance door, TELMA retarder,
TV/video, finished white/green/red.
M.O.T. MARCH 1996

1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

52 recliners, brown/orange moquette,
courier seat, tinted side windows, power
entrance door, finished white/blue.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1996

1988 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-SH 12M

49 recliners, orange/brown/red moquette,
o/s rear toilet, continental door, servery,
drinks machine, fridge, double glazed
tinted side windows, driver's berth, power
entrance door, finished duo blue.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

1988 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE JUBILEE B599 12M

51 recliners, grey/red moquette, o/s rear
sunken toilet, continental door, courier
seat, double glazed tinted side windows,
curtains, water boiler, fridge, wired
TV/video, power entrance door, finished
white/red/grey.
M.O.T. MAY 1996

1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

51 recliners, beige/orange moquette, tinted
side windows, curtains, drinks machine, o/s
rear sunken toilet, continental door, power
entrance door, finished cream/red.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken
toilet o/s rear, continental door, double
glazed side windows, curtains, courier
seat, water boiler, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1986 VAN HOOL ALICRON INTEGRAL 12M

51/53 recliners, grey/orange moquette,
centre sunken demountable toilet,
continental door, double glazed tinted side
windows, curtains, MAN power, finished
silver/brown.
M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

1984 DAF SB2300 JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P50 12M

49 recliners, brown/beige/orange moquette,
rear floor mounted toilet, continental door,
tinted side windows with curtains and
blinds, drinks machine, finished white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1996

1983 (September) BOVA EUROPA II INTEGRAL 12M

49 seats, brown striped moquette, courier
seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door,
tinted side windows, power entrance door,
wired TV/video, finished white/red/blue.
M.O.T. APRIL 1996

CBW

Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

PANIC among operators at the news that the PCV drivers' eyesight test is to be toughened up next July is understandable. It comes in the wake of a tidal wave of legislation which has besieged readers in the last 18 months.

We can hear ourselves muttering "Oh no. Not more rules." But the good news is that, as far as we can tell, the uncorrected eye test should be passable by anyone with reasonable sight.

However, getting a definition of the rules was an uphill struggle. The DoT's silly explanation was that a visual acuity of 3/60 on the Snellen scale meant seeing objects at three feet which someone with normal sight can see at 60 feet. What size of object? What is normal? For plain English read page 4.

The impact on the industry's drivers is difficult to predict. We suspect that the figure of 3,000 PCV and LGV drivers whose jobs are at risk is low and the unions' guess of a quarter of all drivers too high. What is certain is that any drivers with any worries about their vision should ask an optician to check it now. If not, failing sight could be a timebomb ticking away under their careers until re-test time.

● **MISBEHAVIOUR** by schoolchildren has been a thorn in the side of operators for as long as anyone can remember. But the problem is getting worse and the scale of the disruption has serious safety implications.

This week our News includes a report of a teenage boy seriously injured after falling from a Liverpool bus. He may have been pushed.

It's an incident threatening to happen every day when children, bored with damaging the seats and verbally abusing the driver, start to attack each other.

■ **Next week Marksman investigates.** We would like to hear your views on fax 01733 467154.

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Alan Barrett takes over from Bill Hiron as Thamesway managing director



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events

11 February: RMI Anniversary Routemaster Road Run, London. Details from Routemaster Operators and Owners Association, PO Box 582, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 4BG

13 February: CPT Surrey County Group regional dinner, Inn on the Lake, Godalming, Surrey, 7.30 pm. Guest speaker CPT president Ron Whittle. Details from Jim Carley on 0171 831 4290

13-15 February: Smart Card 96. Ninth Annual International Advanced Card Exhibition & Convention, Olympia 2, London. Details from Sharon McCoy, QMS, PO Box 277, Peterborough, PE2 6UN, tel 01733 394304, fax 01733 390042

22 February: Buses Worldwide meeting, Fred Tallent Hall, Drummond Street, London NW1. Ted Relton on Berlin and Stockholm Revisited. Details from Ian Johnston, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants, GU13 9HE

29 February and 1 March: Fourth TAS conference on future of bus in local transport. Kensington Palace Hotel, London, W8. Details from TAS Publications and Events Ltd, Britannic House, 1a Chapel Street, Preston, PR1 8BU, fax 01729 840705

19-23 March: CBW Canadian Study Tour sponsored by Volvo and Plaxton. Details from Paul Tappin on 01235 819393 or fax 01235 816464

▼ Coach and Bus

M4 driver remanded

THE driver of the coach which crashed on the M4 killing 13 British Legion members has been remanded to appear before Northavon magistrates next month.

Stephen Brown, 39, will appear on 12 February on 13 summons of causing death by dangerous driving, and a separate summons of driving without due care and attention.

▼ Coach and Bus

Facts blurred over new eyesight test

New rules will eliminate 'grandfather rights'

by Mark Williams

A 'SCARE story' on a southern TV channel has focussed attention on a sight test which will end some coach and bus drivers' careers.

The new rules eliminate 'grandfather rights' so that, at driver licence renewal, all drivers must be able to reach the new standard. But Meridian claimed a quarter of all drivers of PSVs and HGVs could fail the new test.

The Confederation of Passenger Transport UK says that figure may be exaggerated, but it admits the Government estimates that 3,000 drivers of PSVs and HGVs may be short of the mark, too. The test examines both eyes without glasses. Previously, only one eye had to reach the minimum standard.

The CPT set out to allay operators' fears about the new test, but says it has objected to the "excessive" standard and the fact it singles out commercial drivers.

"There have been a number of misleading stories in the media recently which have given the impression that drivers of PSVs and HGVs who wear glasses or contact lenses will not be able to pass the new eye tests. This is not true," said a CPT spokesman.

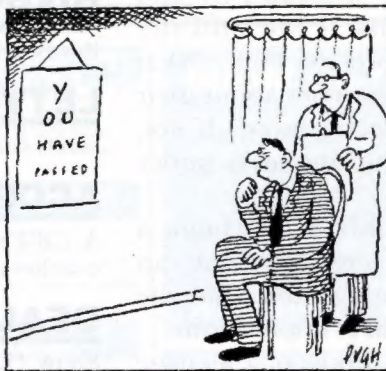
"The new requirement exists to ensure that, for example, any drivers who have their glasses or lenses dislodged or removed by an impact accident will have sufficient vision to enable

them to bring the vehicle to a stop safely."

The CPT spokesman said he had understood that drivers would have to be severely visually impaired not to reach the standard set by the new test.

One alarmed operator, Dennis Plummer of Phoenix Travel in Sussex, said: "This is ludicrous. My glasses have never fallen off."

In a letter to CBW - published in full next week - Phil Anslow of Pontypool says it's time to join forces with the powerful HGV lobby against decisions taken in Brussels. "As an operator, I find it strange I need to read about this in the Press, and that my company has had no notification from the DoT on such a serious issue."



▼ Coach and Bus

Speed limit and lane ban confusion

INEVITABLE confusion regarding interpretation of new coach speed and outside lane regulations has started to surface.

The outside lane rules specifically cover all coaches and buses regardless of age with more than eight seats and more than 7.5 tonnes GVW (CBW, 6 January). But minicoaches and minibuses below this threshold may continue to use the forbidden lane.

However, police in Staffordshire stopped a midcoach driver who used the outside lane on the M6. It was assumed incorrectly that the 1 January 1996 registered Autobus Classique-bodied Mercedes-

Benz 814D owned by Leon's of Stafford was covered by the ban.

Leon's director, Andy Douglas, said the driver was stopped for 40 minutes and then given a warning. However, Mr Douglas rang the police and, after checking with Autobus Classique and CBW, quoted the new law and obtained an apology.

His advice to all operators of similar size coaches is to keep a copy of the 6 January issue of CBW in the cab.

Autobus Classique sales director Alan White said: "I have no doubt Leon's will not be the only victim of the confusion. Perhaps

▼ Coach and Bus

Tougher than first supposed

CBW's investigation into the standard of unaided sight needed to obtain a PCV licence suggests that more drivers will fail during licence renewal than has been supposed.

The Department of Transport confirmed that it is expecting the eye test to be completed by a doctor during the normal course of a PCV driver's medical. The proposed standard for unaided sight in both eyes is for 3/60 on the Snellen scale - previously applicable to only one eye.

The standard chart offers no test lower than 6/60, so that the driver would be asked to view the top, 6/60 line at half the distance - three metres, said an Association of Optometrists spokesman.

An optician we contacted said he would anticipate more problems with the test for corrected sight, and that anyone approaching 50 should be concerned about the sight test. Around 60 per cent of the UK's 100,000 coach and bus drivers require eyesight correction.

CPT would consider corresponding with all chief police officers to ensure that at least the enforcers understand the situation."

New 65mph speed limiter settings introduced on 1 January add further scope for misunderstanding. It covers coaches and buses over 7.5 tonnes GVW which were first used on or after 1 January 1988. Older vehicles and all under 7.5 tonnes GVW are not covered by the rule.

● In a letter to CBW, CPT technical executive, Colin Copelin, explains how 100 km/h (62.5 mph) can be interpreted as 65mph - see **CBW** page 24

▼ Coach

Vandalism fears force bypass work boycott

Operators refuse to do business with Newbury site security firms

VANDALISM and fear at the Newbury bypass site have led to operators refusing to work for the security companies.

One of the remaining operators coaching crews to the area has insisted on removing his legal lettering and O-licence discs in an attempt to outwit the protesters, while another coach operator is facing a £1,000-plus bill for coach repairs.

The coach vandalised at Chieveley Services belongs to Nostalgiabus of Mitcham. But protesters who cut brake pipes and ripped out wiring on the AEC Reliance vehicle may have scored an own goal, since one of the firm's directors, Ron Gould, is an anti-road sympathiser.

"Odd as it may seem for a coach opera-

by Mark Williams

tor, I don't want to see any more roads built, but better use made of the roads we have. And I don't like this kind of work," said Mr Gould. The coach was immobilised.

"These people have good intelligence. My vehicle had been diverted

to Chieveley but they still tracked it down."

The experience of Horseman of Reading, which had its fleet grounded by a protester chaining himself to the depot gates, has led to Newbury operator Bennetts Coaches refusing work.

"As a company policy, we are not getting

involved," said traffic manager Simon Weaver. "We've got to think of our other commitments."

And the operator who has the bulk of the security crew work has obtained anonymity by removing his firm's name and O-licence discs from his four, ageing vehicles, and communicating in code words by mobile phone only.

"We've got to switch our mobiles on at odd times, because these people have scanners," said a spokesman for the firm. "One of our new drivers was petrified when he had a protester chain himself to the prop shaft, and we've had some vandalism. Another protester saw the dealer name, Kirkby, on the number plate and said he knew who our drivers worked for!"



Bennetts Coaches: 'not getting involved'

▼ Bus

Chesterfield assurances accepted

THE competition and consumer affairs minister, John Taylor, has accepted assurances from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission that Stagecoach's takeover of Chesterfield Transport will not act against the public interest.

The MMC investigation concluded that there was not significant competition between Chesterfield and Stagecoach subsidiary East Midlands Motor Services, and that lower fare structures, increased efficiency, new vehicles and an innovative approach could result from the acquisition.

▼ Coach

Two Moseleys

VIN Moseley has asked us to point out that Mr Alf Moseley has no financial or management interest in Moseley's three outlets. This is in the light of Mr Alf Moseley's intention to return to coach sales at his Shepsed site.

▼ Bus

Boy 'pushed from vehicle'

A TEENAGE boy who fell from a Liverpool bus is in a serious but comfortable condition, says Fazakerley Hospital. The police are probing allegations that his fall was the result of a fight aboard a Fairway double-deck bus, and that he may have been pushed from the lower deck emergency exit, from which he fell only to be run over by an overtaking, Merseybus vehicle. He sustained leg injuries and lost part of his ear. Witnesses say a fight broke out on the street shortly before a group of youths boarded the bus.

▼ Bus

Stagecoach buys Blundred ops

STAGECOACH Holdings is expanding its operations in Devon with the imminent acquisition of Exeter-based Devon General and Torquay-based Bayline from Transit Holdings, Harry Blundred's company which also operates in Portsmouth, Oxford, Docklands and Queensland, Australia.

Contracts have been exchanged to acquire the entire issued share capital for a consideration of £16.1 million in loan notes. The deal will be completed following the finalisation of a final audit, and a pound-for-pound reduction to the price will be made in the event of

net assets being less than £5.1 million.

Devon General, the first NBC subsidiary to be sold to its management, in 1986, employs 380 staff and operates 160 minibuses on services in Exeter and South Devon.

Bayline, which was formed by splitting Devon General in 1992, employs 330 staff, and operates 160 minibuses and one open-top double decker.

"The decision to sell Devon General and Bayline was a tough one, but I now have the finances to strengthen the new group, leaving it debt free," Mr Blundred said.

● Full story in *Transit*

INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK

News

In their own words: why Harry Blundred sold Devon General and Bayline and why Stagecoach bought them. What Steve Norris is going to do to the bus industry. Who's on the latest rail franchise shortlists. Why the MMC cleared Stagecoach's takeover of Chesterfield. How FirstBus bought Stagecoach's 25 per cent share in Mainline. Which MP is taking up Warrington's fight in the House of Commons.

Plus!

More cost cutting by FirstBus in the South East, as Ahlers leaves Rider subsidiary in the North West.

Analysis

How 'aggressive' pay and conditions deals for staff helped lift the profits of privatised London General. And what is Q Drive and how much money is it making?

And what's more...

All the latest people moves and the biggest appointments and tenders classified section there is.

Fill in the subscription form NOW! Page 59

In brief

Gift from Nat Ex

AGE Concern is to benefit from a new sales initiative launched by National Express. Until 15 February, over-50s who hold a £7 discount coach card are able to make a return journey on any National Express service for just £6.99. The offer is subject to seat availability and does not cover travel on either Fridays or Sundays. National Express will donate 25p to Age Concern for every card sold.

Finals venue

BUS Driver of the Year finals will be held at Princes Parade, Blackpool, on 15 September. Manoeuvrability tests will be followed by a road run, monitored by Skillplace Training's Brian Evans and Sheffield Mainline instructor Malcolm Woodward. Details from UK Bus Driver of the Year, at Bus and Coach Training Ltd in Rickmansworth.

TRL to be sold

THE Transport Research Laboratory is to be sold to a foundation formed by its current management. The sale of the Crowthorne establishment and a small, satellite lab near Edinburgh, was eventually narrowed down to two bidders - the other being a consortium which included the RAC and AA.

Deals go ahead

THE Department of Trade and Industry has cleared British Bus's acquisition of Motts Coaches' Yellow Bus subsidiary, and its acquisition of FirstBus's small Staffordshire bus company, Frontline Enterprises. Both deals had attracted the attention of the OFT.

Winning trip

LYNDON Pritchard exceeded his sales target by 50 per cent and won a trip to New York as his reward from Buspak. He works from South Wales Transport headquarters in Swansea, being responsible for advertisements on all SWT and Brewers buses.

▼ Coach

Clapton unrepentant as ad causes outcry

'Industry's dirty linen should not be washed in public'

By Mark Williams

A SERIES of Clapton Coaches' advertisements challenging coach hirers to ask operators for insurance and MoT details has angered a neighbouring operator.

Clapton Coaches placed the small ads in a local freesheet. The first reads: "Questions to ask when hiring a coach. "No 1: Is it insured?" and the second suggests asking if vehicles are MoT'd.

"I was surprised and disappointed to see this advertisement," said Centurion Travel's transport manager Martin Cross. "Is this the way we have to portray ourselves to the general public?"

"If Clapton Coaches think other operators do not have the correct insurance, they should gather their evidence and report it through the proper channels, not wash the industry's dirty linen in public."

But Clapton Coaches' managing director Maurice Chivers is unrepentant... and warns that there are a further 28 questions in the Summer-long series!

"I have spent an awful lot of money doing things properly and it upsets me that other people do not," said Mr

Chivers. "The adverts certainly aren't aimed at Mr Cross or his company but another operator has openly boasted that one of his vehicles had no MoT."

"The next question in my advert asks the hirer to find out whether the coach is double-glazed, and the next whether the vehicle is less than four years old. Now, Centurion runs a number of older vehicles which, though immaculate, do me a disservice since they are hired at two thirds of my rate. If a hirer were to ask Mr Cross these questions, his answer would have to be 'no'."



Claptons and Centurian clash swords over controversial advertisement

▼ Bus

Cityline takes advantage of MoD promotion

A MINISTRY of Defence office promoting public transport to its staff has prompted Bristol-based Cityline to invest £750,000 in new vehicles.

The MoD's brand-new Abbey Wood complex, north of the city, will eventually employ 5,000 people. And among the first passengers on Cityline's new service will be Abbey Wood's director of general business strategy, John Gulvin.

"A direct bus service linking Abbey Wood with Bristol city centre and Parkway Station is an essential part of our public

transport strategy," said Mr Gulvin. "We are keen to promote this excellent new service. I will be catching it regularly, and I am sure that people moving from London - who are used to commuting - will be using it too."

The £254 million project which will house the procurement division of the MoD has helped fund the building of the new Filton Abbey Wood Station, will be a founder member of the Northavon Traffic Forum, and has a car-sharing scheme. The site is the largest single office development in Europe, covering 98 acres.

▼ Bus

Park and ride is 'green' aid

A BRISTOL park-and-ride scheme is helping the battle against pollution, according to a new report.

Local council pollution experts admit the level of pollution generally has increased in the two years since the Brislington park-and-ride scheme opened but believe it would be much worse if the scheme had not been launched.

The Avon County Council report says: "Without the removal of vehicles through the park-and-ride scheme, there might have been a further reduction in air quality."

The report admits that, as a whole, the air quality in the city during the Spring and Summer of 1993 deteriorated.

It concludes with a warning: "The results show that there are also now short-term excursions above the mandatory limit."

▼ Coach and Bus

New firm is formed

THAMESWAY and Eastern National are to become trading divisions of a new company, Essex Buses, in March.

FirstBus has put Eastern National md Robin Orbell at the head of the new company, which will then centralise much of the administration. Full story in *Transit* this week.

● Alan Barrett is new md at Thamesway as Hiron departs for Eastern Counties in Norwich.

■ See People, page 59

CBW

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▼ Coach and Bus

Geneva hosts a spectacular show

The Swiss market is small, but its annual event had the cream of the world's vehicles

WITH total annual sales of 200 full-sized PSVs, Switzerland is hardly the happiest hunting ground for vehicle suppliers.

Yet the Geneva Show attracts stiff competition from Europe every year and, this year, from as far afield as the USA. It's a showcase for high-tech equipment... and needs to be in the sophisticated environment of one of Europe's richest countries.

Latest entrant to the sector is the US-based Metrotrans which, with its preview at the Geneva Show, is preparing to familiarise European travel with the American concept of medium-sized vehicles for up to 30 passengers. Their show exhibit, with a Ford/Allison power train, was priced at around £82,000 - on the high side, even allowing for the provision of a wheelchair lift in the single passenger door.



Debut: Metrotrans's 24-seater fitted with wheelchair lifts

By Bill Godwin

The vehicle represented the maker's philosophy of using mechanical components from well-known suppliers. The suspension of the tandem axle running gear is based on a Granning

design. *Coach and Bus Week* was also shown drawings of the first Metrotrans forward-control bus, more likely to appeal to the European market.

● Exhibits from Mercedes-Benz at the Geneva Show included an articulated trolley-bus for the

Zürich system, using the first production version of ZF electric wheel motors on two axles.

Also in the hybrid-electric sector, Siemens unveiled a portal drive axle in which a space-saving arrangement puts the motors in the axle housing.

Its first application is being prepared by Swiss builder Hess, with development from Volvo's Irvine engineers, and Wrights of Ballymena is also showing interest in the project.

The Hess display included the first of a new type of passenger-carrying trailer. At 23-metres including the pulling power of a three-door Volvo bus, it can take 157 passengers.

Van Hool brought a trolley-bus, and MAN its new Ayats-bodied coach on 11.192, which, in using German front section and other body parts, offers no hints that it is made in Spain.

▼ Bus

Concept will need political backing to succeed



Sterner: 'this is just the beginning'

THE Environmental Concept Bus took a tiny team of just 20 Volvo staff only 18 months to design and build, with the aid of suppliers (CBW, 28 August 1995).

Using new CAD technology to shorten the design and routine testing, and devising a new style of working, the Swedish company has turned out a concept product, **tested and explained on pages 10 and 11**, almost every part of which is unique.

"To test the driveline, we are building six more products by the end of 1997. They will be different kinds of hybrids - compression-ignition engines, petrol engines, just to see which is the best," said Volvo's environmental spokeswoman Kerstin Sterner.

"But you will see some of these innovations in our normal production a couple of years from now. The braking system and some of the suspension are likely examples."

The vital aspect of the



Volvo's trio of electric hybrids - car, bus and truck

ECB is, however, its driveline. Its introduction into production, if it happens, will depend as much on political will as demand, she says. Already, Volvo is working with Stagecoach and the Columbian government to introduce integrated and environmentally sound public transport to Bogota, but this has hit political problems.

Eventually, she says, nature may force the hand of politicians but, even then, cities are faced with the problem that they were never designed for modern patterns of travel.

"A lot depends on the

politicians. How brave can they be? Will they get anything out of it? Inevitably, we will reach a point where we don't have many choices. If the city is suffocated and congested, and people feel uncomfortable walking the street, it's easy for the politicians to be brave."

Solutions such as the ECB don't come cheap, says Ms Sterner.

"In the beginning, buses like this may be double the price of an ordinary bus. But it's still reasonable. Preserving the environment must cost something."

CBW

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▼ Bus

We drive the

First test of Volvo's experimental vehicle

by Mark Williams

THE unmistakable whistle of a gas turbine engine and a wisp of heat haze from the exhaust on the roof are the only indications that the Volvo bus I am about to drive has any connection with the internal combustion engine.

It's the Environmental Concept Bus (ECB), being track-tested by British journalists at the race track in Jerez, southern Spain. And I, loosely qualifying as a journalist, am about to make my first experience of bus driving that of taking the wheel of

one of the most technologically-advanced vehicles in the world.

I am beckoned to the driving seat - now set facing the passenger door. It's on rails and, as it runs along them into the central driving position, turns to face the hi-tech dash.

In front of me are two colour LCD computer screens; the central screen replaces the speedometer and main gauges, while a smaller screen on a stalk on the right side of the

wheel offers monitoring of engine systems, cabin temperature, electrics, and a plethora of detail. A touch of a button brings up screen after screen of information.

With my foot on the brake, I switch on the engine system, wait for the green 'bus' symbol to appear on the screen, release the parking brake, select 'drive' and prepare for take-off. I am unprepared for what happens next.

The ECB pulls away surely, powerfully and



The ECB's exhaust vents through the roof slot

Zero-emission electric motors combi

IN tackling the very real issues of the environmental impact of motor transport, Volvo's design team has dovetailed the best of existing technology into a

single bus. The basic principle is the hybridisation of zero-emission electric motors with low-emission gas turbine generators.

Both are relatively low-tech devices but, helped along by personal computer-level technology, an impressive demonstration of what can be realistically achieved.

The ECB's power train does, however, make good use of both. After charging the advanced, Nickel Metal Hydride, 250-volt dry batteries provided by Varta, the bus's effective range is a paltry 12 km. It's enough for a one-way run through an environmentally-sensitive city centre, but inadequate for serious operation.

However, the battery-only range can be improved and it's backed up with a surprisingly quiet and small gas turbine generator, which feeds the driveline with enough power (110kW / 150

bhp) during low-demand runs - in suburban areas, for example - to supply a surplus to recharge the batteries. Where extra power is needed, both turbine generator and batteries can combine to push 142 kW/170bhp through the axles.

The gas turbine we saw burns ethanol, easily produced using ancient brewery and distilling processes. There are few worries about combustion emissions and none about sustainable resources. In any case, the gas turbine can run on almost any combustible fuel.

Motion itself also fuels the batteries. At the point of deceleration, the motor performs the reverse role of generator, offering the equivalent of engine braking at the same time. Disc brakes all round do the rest.

Since the connection between drive and power supply is wire cable rather than drive shafts, position of the gas turbine generator is flexible: It's gone into the roof, as have

the batteries, but the options are almost limitless. The vertically-aligned fuel tanks for the ethanol are at the rear.

The absence of a conventional transmission allows the ECB to have a completely level floor. Only the five rear seats have been raised to accommodate the rear-steer axle componentry, electric motor and self-leveling suspension system. At the front, the steer-



Driver's seat is mounted on rails



Packed with electronics



The 'heart': gas turbine generator

ECB DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	8.4 metres
Length	10.7m
Width	2.55m
Height	3.2m
Interior height	2.1m
Front overhang	1.25m
Rear overhang	1.05m
Turning radius	10.7m
GVW	15 tonnes

bus of tomorrow

Spain shows it is more than just a concept

smoothly with a loud hum. The speed-dependent power steering responds as well as the best executive cars and self-levelling suspension keeps the top-heavy bus on an even keel. But this is much more than simply an easy drive. It is very, very pleasant.

As I approach the first bend, I release the throttle and the electrical equivalent of engine braking slows the ECB. I adjust the speed to 25 km/hr with the footbrake. I am urged to get the ECB

to its maximum power down the straight. The whistle of the gas turbine spinning at above 60,000 rpm is barely audible above the hum of the electric motor, but the ECB bowls along at 70 km/hr in no time. The test drive is over far too soon for me, and for everyone present.

The ECB may have a few rough edges. It needs more range running on batteries. The engineers were worried that rain would stop play, since they had spent little

of their precious time waterproofing the vast electrical system. But the ECB is much more than just a test-bed for experimental projects. It is very nearly a practical, fully functional city bus.

The ECB is not tomorrow's technology, but today's, and I am left hoping that the extraordinarily-talented team of Swedish technicians who assembled it are rewarded, sooner rather than later, piecemeal or complete, with a production version of their dream machine.

ned with gas turbines

ing gear occupies the void either side of the driver.

This allows a wheel to go into each corner, enhancing manoeuvrability. With all-wheel steer, the bus can be 'crabbed' into tight spots, and negotiate city streets originally designed for a horse and cart.

Ultra-wide Michelin tyres on the rear wheels have helped counteract sidewall flexing, which can introduce roll.

The ECB has a central driving position, the driver being pushed forward to offer excellent visibility. This effectively divorces the driver from the passengers, though his seat runs on rails and pivots to face the entrance door when required. However, the driving position anticipates cashless, Smartcard technology in which the driver does not need constant passenger contact.

The driver's environment is superb. Via the three LCD computer screens, he can monitor

every part of the system. Five PC-type computers work invisibly to control engine and electrical management.

The driver's rear view is via TV monitors, enhanced by proximity sensors in the concept truck we saw.

The ECB is based on a monocoque, box-section aluminium frame carrying GRP panelling. Like the rest of the bus, it's designed for recycling.

The frame allows a 320mm floor height which drops, using the hydraulic suspension system, to a 170mm loading height.

It provides 16 square metres of floor space which, on the test bus, was configured Continental-style for 33 seats and 40 or more standees. The seats themselves were designed for the project.

There is very little on the vehicle which has not been specifically designed and built for the project. The investment is a progression

which began with Volvo's gas turbine/electric car, the ECC.

Its trucking brother, the ECT, soaked up around £9 million, much of which went on the design of the driveline, and the ECB cost an additional £5 million despite sharing that driveline. The project was backed by the suppliers, and the Swedish government.

CBW



The ECB bowls along at 70 km/hr in no time at all



Design of the ECB allows for a low, level floor



The design may be unconventional, but the ECB's looks grow on you



Debut twins: launched at Coach & Bus 95 and now with their operators

▼ Coach

Urbanriders on the road

As AW Group plans investment

COLISEUM and Channel Coachways put the UK's first Beulas-bodied Iveco Urbanrider full-size coaches on the road this month — as the AW Group, the Iveco Bus distributor, plans six-figure investment in its Ratby headquarters.

Iveco is staging its first sustained assault on this country's coach market and its distributor says demand for the Spanish-built coach is more than double expectations.

The AW Group said that, together with the smaller Eco3 on Iveco's front-engined midi-coach chassis, more than 30 new Iveco coaches have been sold for delivery by August.

A second Beulas for

Coliseum will be competing for honours at this year's Brighton Coach rally. Joint managing director, Kerry Petter, said: "My first impression of the Iveco/Beulas combination is very encouraging. We intend to specify air conditioning on all our future coach purchases and the fact that Beulas offers this as a standard fitting makes this product

by Mike Morgan

excellent value for money. I am especially impressed by the 350 bhp power of the Iveco product."

Although chassis supply is not a problem, body slots at the Beulas factory are in short supply according to Alan Wilson, AW Group partner. He said: "We always said that we would sell Beulas to

order, but they've all been sold up to August."

However, AW's rolling programme with the Eco3 ensures that they are coming off the Spanish line at the rate of two or three a month, giving immediate availability.

A demonstrator is due to embark on a programme of regional roadshows starting in Hertfordshire, while Pointer of

Northampton is among the first customers with a 31-seat-plus-toilet executive coach.

The increased throughput of new vehicles at Ratby has prompted AW to invest in its facilities and work on improved workshops, stores and preparation facilities is due to start this week.

Meanwhile, an unusual customer for its existing engineering capabilities is an operator in Madeira who is taking delivery of Routemasters converted to open top at Ratby.

With six already in the pipeline, AW is looking for more RMs to satisfy this new sales outlet for the classic London bus.



A six-figure investment will transform the AW Group's facilities

▼ Coach

Get to bottom of charts and come out on top

THE electronic revolution has hit the world of tachograph analysis producing quicker, cheaper and more detailed reports on the activities of vehicles and their drivers. Although computer analysis has found a ready market among HGV operators an industry specialist has questioned the reluctance of coach and bus operators to jump on the band wagon.

Use of the latest technology cannot only cut the amount of time devoted to reading tachograph charts but can be more efficient and provide the operator with analysis listing up to 99 violations of the regulations.

Within the last 15 months, TruTac of Coventry has captured over 150 clients running from around 500 depots in the truck industry and is processing more than 20,000 charts per week.

Within 72 hours, detailed reports to match the operator's own requirements are dis-

patched, and managing director David West claims that the number of violations per company and per driver decline sharply once the system is in place.

Already operators have been able to spot discrepancies that would have been difficult, if not impossible to identify using conventional optical analysis.

Electronic analysis is so accurate that the odometer readings recorded by the driver can be matched against previous charts so that missing mileage and ghost drivers can be exposed within seconds. In addition the mileage claimed by the driver can be checked against the third trace on the chart which records distance covered. Consequently one delivery company discovered some drivers under-recording distance travelled on long-distance trips so that they could bank spare kilometres for private work without the company's consent

or knowledge. It's a practice that would be equivalent to a coach tour driver falsifying charts so that they could do day excursions at the destination, charging their passengers and pocketing the proceeds.

However, with only four coach customers on TruTac's books, Mr West is surprised that more PSV operators have not taken advantage of the system.

Mr West claims his company's service offers savings of up to 50 per cent on the cost of conventional tacho analysis and the option of a fourth trace now available on automatic tachographs opens up an improved

service for operators.

For example, fuel consumption or engine over-revving can be monitored. But Mr West says computer analysis is the most reliable and cost-effective method of taking advantage of these opportunities and keeping a closer watch over what is happening to driver and vehicle.

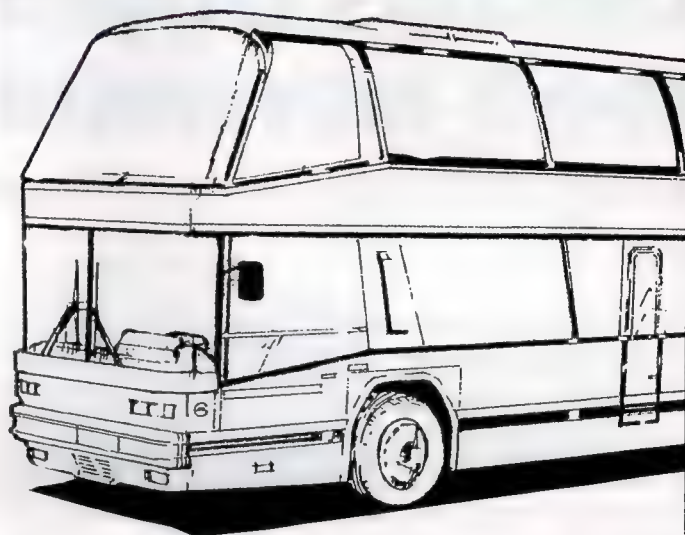
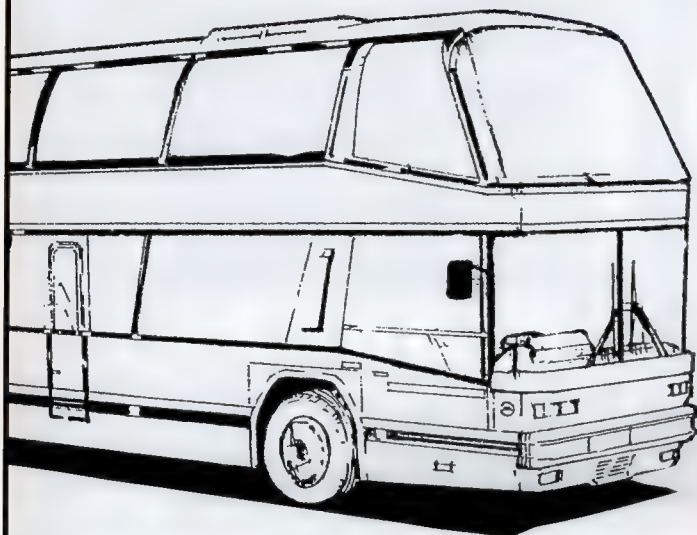
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▼ Coach

London's biggest coach movement

Around 6,000 Japanese descend on capital

COACH Operator of the Year, Clarkes of London, expects to use up to 80 of its own vehicles for one of the largest movements of coach passengers ever recorded in the capital, which it is covering for the Japan Travel Bureau along with Hounslow-based Travellers.

Over a 10-day period next month around 6,000 Japanese descend on London for the annual Charle lingerie convention which attracts worldwide attention as it moves between different international venues each year.

In addition to airport transfers to London hotels as the visitors arrive towards the end of next month, the Charle itinerary requires daily excursions to attractions such as the Tower of London and destinations including

By Mike Morgan

Stratford-upon-Avon and Bath.

Although the highlight of the convention is a gathering at Alexandra Palace, the event is so big that it has to be split between two separate nights.

Former Metropolitan Police coach liaison officer, Bob Pilbeam, has been put on the case to help plan the coach movements so that they cause minimum disruption to London's traffic.

Clarkes' managing director, Bill Clarke, is certain this coach hire is a record for London. He said: "It is the biggest movement I've ever known in my time in the industry."

In preparation for the Charle job the company has



Bill Clarke anticipates using up to 80 of his own coaches

retained 10 vehicles leased from Yeates for last season. However, these temporary additions will be quickly replaced as Clarkes takes delivery of its £3.6 million 1996 order for 24 Volvo/Jonckheeres, taking the fleet over the 80 mark for the first time. Mr Clarke has scheduled the supply of new vehicles over the next three or four months so they can be prepared in readiness for anticipated increased demand for his coaches in the coming season.

Ordered in October, the new intake includes the star of Coach & Bus 95, the Mistral 50, the first of Jonckheere's new-generation coach. The remainder

are DeaUVilles. Most are 53-seaters like the Mistral, but seven air-conditioned 49-seaters have been specified and Clarkes is to test five with automatic transmission on London work.

Clarkes plans to maintain its high-profile with a publicity-generating official opening of its Kangley Bridge Road depot on the agenda. Also the Mistral is lined up for the concours d'elegance at this year's Brighton Coach Rally on 18/19 April along with one of the new DeaUVilles and an all-ladies team in charge of a Jonckheere-bodied B10M newly refurbished after 300,000 km.



CBW Awards winner in 1995 and keeping a high profile

▼ Coach

Top of league DAF/Van Hool for Premier Division operator

EAVESWAY of Wigan will have a new Everton team coach in time for the Euro 96 football championship and the start of the 1996/7 season. But the 32-seat Royal Class air-conditioned executive is an addition to fleet following an O-licence increase from 12 to 15 vehicles.

Delivery from supplier Hughes DAF is planned for May and the DAF Bus-chassied coach will be adorned by a stunning one-off livery

designed by coach body-builder Van Hool, for Everton FC.

Powered by DAF 330bhp engine, the SB3000WS chassis will carry Van Hool Alizee DH bodywork equipped with all the extras expected for Premier League travel.

All passengers will sit at tables and can either enjoy the 10-stack CD on individual multi-channel headphones or watch one of the four video monitors. Injured players can be



Eavesway: fleet strength increases from 12 to 15

treated on two convertible beds. A comprehensively equipped central galley area will incorporate: 100-litre freezer; 250-litre fridge with built-in wine coolers; aircraft-type Helios hot air oven; microwave; percolator; sink with hot and cold water; and water boiler.

On board RDS traffic information and Traficmaster routefinder will help the driver get the team to the match on time.

CBW

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▼ Study Tour

Blend business with pleasure...

by joining us on our amazing Canadian tour

By Mark Williams

TRAINS, planes and buses... that's the territory for the *Coach and Bus Week* study tour to French Canada.

The four-night trip flying from Heathrow on 19 March takes in the cream of Canada's sightseeing, spiced with visits to PSV operators and manufacturers.



Chateau Frontenac: hospitality

The £699 Plaxton/Volvo sponsored visit starts in Toronto, takes the train to Montreal, then takes in ancient Quebec. And, like the country itself, some of the operators manage to blend old and new.

A case in point is Autobus Dupont, in Quebec. The 120-vehicle operator, which runs everything from 15-seat minibuses to super-luxury coaches, has a similar profile of work to that of many UK operators.

However, when it wanted to run reproduction trolley-buses

for tourism, it discovered that nobody in North America made them. So the operator turned manufacturer and, using a Thomas chassis as its base, built its own.

The 49-seat Champlain 1608 Trolley-bus features oak-panelled interior, padded wooden-slat seats and the boxy shape reminiscent of trolley-buses from the turn of the century. Yet its 'heart' is a Caterpillar engine and Allison transmission.

The bus comes with double glazing and air conditioning and, being built using galvanised steel, aluminium and polyurethane insulating foam, is probably more durable and comfortable than its predecessor.

Autobus's own fleet of these vehicles tours Quebec on a hop-on, hop-off basis similar to Britain's open-toppers. With a set fare of \$19.95 (£10), the route passes the major museums and tourist hotspots.

You'll have bags of time to ask more about the way that Jean Dupont runs his business in this historic French-Canadian city, and be able to enjoy the hospitality of one of Quebec's premier hotels, the Chateau Frontenac, before catching up with souvenir shopping on the morning of your departure back to Britain.

● The Study Tour runs from 19 March to 23 March. For full details of the itinerary, contact Paul Tappin, on 01235 819393, or fax 01235 816464. The cost of the trip, including flights and transfers based on two people sharing, is £699 per person. Single supplement is £145, and there are charges for some optional tours.



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90 (G)	DAF SB2305	Algarve	53 recliners

1990 (PP) VOLVO B10M ALGARVE

49/53 recliners, toilet, double glazed



89 (G)	DAF	LAG Panoramic	49 seat Exec.
89 (F)	MERCEDES 507D	Reeve Burgess	16 seats
88 (F)	VW LT55	Optare City Pacer	23 seats



1988 (C) DAF MB DUPL CARIBBEAN II

49 recliners, toilet, double glazed

85 (PP)	LEYLAND	Paramount 3500	35 recliners
83 (Y)	FORD TRANSIT	Sweet Sixteen	16 seats

1991 (J) TOYOTA OPTIMO II

18 seats, power door, soft trim



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▼ **Employment Law**

Four allege unfair sack

 **THREE** drivers and a foreman mechanic claimed at a Cardiff Industrial Tribunal they had been unfairly dismissed by Evans Coaches, of New Tredegar. The men, drivers Christy James, of Hengoed; Taliss Jones, of Rhymney; and Malcolm Jones, of New Tredegar; and foreman mechanic Bryan Harrhy, of Hengoed; claim that, in August last year, the company, of 60 Derlwyn Street, New Tredegar, Gwent, had failed to inform them of an agreement with another coach operator that they would undertake relief work for that operator.

They told the tribunal the only knowledge they had of the arrangement was when the work rota was posted, informing them of the change, a day after they usually noted their forthcoming shifts. When the drivers refused to go to the other operator's depot, director and transport manager Ian Evans dismissed them for gross misconduct. Mr Harrhy was dismissed when he refused to go to another depot and repair a coach.

Mr Evans said the company, which was established in 1921, had encountered financial problems, particularly after the collapse of the coal mining industry in South Wales. He had to re-mortgage his home to prevent the company from collapsing and he had talks with other coach operators in an effort to sell the business. He eventually came to an agreement with Jones Motors, of Abercynon, for his drivers to undertake relief work on their behalf. He agreed he had only told the drivers the day after they had noted their shifts for the coming week.

Mr Evans said he had no alternative but to dismiss the three drivers and Mr Harrhy for gross misconduct. He did not consider the arrangement with Jones Motors changed the terms of their contracts of employment, as they would be working the same hours as previously.


For the four men, Allan Mayne, Transport & General Workers Union district officer, said they were all long-serving employees. He argued Mr Evans had been completely unreasonable in his actions.

The tribunal adjourned the proceedings until February.

▼ **Traffic Regulation**

Decision deferred on impose TRC on city

South Lancashire Transport and Guide Friday object but

 **NORTH** Western deputy traffic commissioner John Levin has deferred decision on whether to impose a Traffic Regulation Condition applying to registered local bus services operating along Northgate Street, Chester, following opposition from South Lancashire Transport and Guide Friday.

Cheshire County Council had asked for:

- A TRC to be imposed applying to the operation of vehicles in the provision of local services operated in either direction along Northgate Street, between George Street and Princess Street, between 8am and 6pm on Mondays to Saturdays;
- That in the case of a service registered on or after 4 January, no journey shall operate unless it is in replacement for a journey which previously operated at a similar time;
- And, in the case of a service registered on or before 4 January, no journey shall operate so as to increase that overall frequency of journeys.

The county also requested that either "unless the service is registered as 'frequent'." be added to the latter or a new paragraph which read: "No vehicle shall operate in the provision of a frequent service, as defined in the

by Michael Jewell

Schedule to the PSV (Registration of Local Services) Regulations 1996."

Alan West, transport coordinator for Cheshire County Council, told a Manchester public inquiry that pedestrianisation of certain streets in May 1995 caused increased traffic to use Northgate Street.

Before pedestrianisation there were 1,800 bus movements a day on Northgate Street; afterwards it increased to 2,936. That had led to severe traffic congestion with long queues of standing traffic.

Many complaints were received from local traders in Northgate Street, who were concerned about the deterioration of the air quality. The pollutant levels of nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide exceeded some of the relative air quality guidelines.

When large vehicles were loading and unloading the situation was at its worst. Traffic came to a standstill, creating long queues of stationary traffic. As Northgate Street was a narrow shopping street, and because of the pedestrian flow, it meant pedestrians often had to step off the pavement on to the road, exposing themselves to danger.

The perfect solution would be to make Northgate Street one way northbound, but that would lead to difficulties with the bus station. However, there was an agreement with the city council to make Northgate Street one way southbound, and that scheme would be introduced on an experimental basis in February/March for one month.

The TRC proposed two options and the county council supported the second option, said Mr West.


County Highway Engineer



South Lancashire Transport: h

▼ **Employment Law**

Tribunal throws out driver's claim

 A MANCHESTER Industrial Tribunal has dismissed a claim by a bus driver, sacked by Stuarts Bus & Coach Co Ltd, that the company had made unlawful deductions from his wages, contrary to the 1986 Wages Act.

John Smith had claimed that the company, of Rothesay Garage, Dukinfield, Cheshire, had failed to pay him wages in lieu of notice and had not paid him for the total number of hours he alleged he had worked in April.

In rejecting Mr Smith's claims in his absence, the tribunal said the company contested his complaints on the basis Mr Smith had been summarily dismissed for refusing to drive a roadworthy vehicle,

and accordingly he was not entitled to any payment in lieu of notice.

It also maintained Mr Smith had not worked the hours he stated he had in April and that he had been paid the correct amount of money for the hours he actually did work.

The company had also mentioned the possibility of a counter claim in respect of a balance of training costs incurred which were repayable if Mr Smith's employment terminated before a certain date. The tribunal said it was dismissing Mr Smith's application in view of his non-attendance and in the light of the absence of any evidence to substantiate his complaints.

n whether to local services

ouncil claims pollution unacceptable

Colin Stredder said the one-way scheme should improve traffic flow on Northgate Street as it would become a two-lane road. It would improve the traffic conditions on Northgate Street but there would be problems in other areas. There was also an extensive redevelopment programme and that could include alterations to the bus station.

Questioned by Michael Waller, for South Lancashire Transport, Mr West said Northgate Street was a source of irritation for members of the public

and traders. The only bus stops in Northgate Street were for tour buses.

He agreed it was vehicles loading and unloading along Northgate Street that played a large part in traffic becoming stationary, and that Chester was a tight-knit city regarding roads and suffered from congestion generally. In reply to James Backhouse, for Guide Friday, Mr West said there was a potential for accidents to occur. He agreed the TRC would not reduce the traffic congestion, saying it would just preserve the status quo. He said the county wished to see fewer journeys operating on Northgate Street but they could not achieve that without affecting one operator unfairly.

Anthony Dee, a Guide Friday director, said they had an agreement with Chester City Transport, which provided the vehicles and the drivers for city tours and Guide Friday provided the guides and the day-to-day running of the tours.

The sight of the open-top tour buses persuaded people on to the tours. Northgate Street was a very important and busy place for getting sightseers on to the tour buses. In July/August they operated six vehicles an hour.


Mr West said it was not the



no serious problems in Chester

▼ Licensing

Licence renewed in full

 SOUTH Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh said Brian Kerslake had been restored to "the upper echelons of coach operators" when he renewed Mr Kerslake's O-licence at a Cardiff public inquiry.

Mr Kerslake, of Unit 3, European Terminal Building, Pantglas Industrial Estate, Bedwas, Newport, Gwent, trading as Castell Coaches, had applied to renew his O-licence in respect of 15 single deckers and two minibuses, an increase in authorisation of two single deckers.

Mr Pugh said Mr Kerslake had received a "glowing report" from the Freight Transport Association, which said it had found his vehicles in a good state of repair.

Mr Pugh said he was delighted to renew the licence for the full five years. It had been an uphill battle which had eventually paid off.

Mr Kerslake said it had been a long hard road and he thanked the DoT for having the patience in allowing him time to put his house in order. He would also like to thank his fitting staff for helping him "turn the corner."

county council's wish to reduce the operation of the tour buses. They did not object to the tour bus running at the July/August frequency. South Lancashire Transport's traffic manager, Martin Bott, said his company was happy for the one-way system to be installed and he felt it would work better than the TRC.

South Lancashire Transport had never had any severe problems with Northgate Street. It had not had to extend running times or put extra vehicles on to keep to the timetable.

Mr Waller said the county's request had been put on the basis it was necessary for the TRC to be imposed to prevent danger to road users or to reduce severe traffic congestion.

As far as preventing danger to road users was concerned, the evidence was flimsy. As far as reducing severe traffic congestion was concerned, Mr West had said the TRC was not to effectively reduce the traffic flow but to put

on a ceiling.

Where was the evidence that traffic congestion on Northgate Street was severe, asked Mr Waller? There had been no evidence about the types of vehicle, how long the traffic stood for and at what times of day.

Mr Backhouse said there had been no evidence to lead the deputy commissioner to the view there was danger to the public that could be prevented by the proposed TRC. The aim of the TRC was not to reduce congestion but to maintain a status quo.


There was no need for the TRC when there was an experimental one-way system being introduced which might take most of the traffic away from Northgate Street.

For the county council, Christine Roberts argued that the imposition of the proposed TRC would bring about a reduction in traffic in Northgate Street.

Mr Levin is to put his decision in writing at a future date.

▼ Licensing

GMBN 'acted fairly in dismissing employee'

 GREATER Manchester Buses (North) was held to have acted fairly in dismissing bus driver Thomas Casey on the grounds his health made him incapable of undertaking the job for which he had been employed.

A Manchester Industrial Tribunal unanimously rejected a claim for unfair dismissal brought by Mr Casey against the company, which trades as GM Buses North, of Wallshaw Street, Oldham.

The tribunal said Mr Casey had been employed as a bus driver since July 1987. He was dismissed with seven weeks notice in


February 1995. The reason for his dismissal was his incapability due to ill health. The company made its decision to dismiss Mr Casey on the basis of sufficient medical evidence, namely a series of reports from its own occupational physicians.

Mr Casey was fairly treated by the company in that the initial decision to dismiss him was set aside after representations were made about the improvement in his health.

A second decision to dismiss Mr Casey was made only after he continued to have an erratic record of attendance, and after reports on a series of training sessions had

shown that Mr Casey, in his own words, had good days and bad days, and was still subject to panic attacks.

In the circumstances, the company acted reasonably, said the tribunal. The decision to dismiss was made after Mr Casey had been absent from work for nearly a year and the company needed to appoint a replacement driver to save costs.

The company followed a fair procedure, involving a disciplinary hearing and a two-stage appeal process, and at every stage Mr Casey was represented by his trade union officer. 



▼ UK

Full programme of workshops and

THE success of the seminars at last year's British Travel Trade Fair (BTTF) has resulted in a full programme of workshops and seminars planned on both days of this year's show.

New for 1996 is a technology clinic, which will be open throughout the show. Computer technol-

ogy continues to bring change to the coaching industry and this free workshop will enable visitors to learn about the latest advances in computerised information and reservation systems.

There will be explanations and demonstrations of the Internet and how it

can be of use to operators. Those new to the World Wide Web will be able to have a go at accessing information during a practical, hands-on workshop.

Making sure operators get the product right will be tackled at a seminar on the Wednesday — "What Does the Group

Travel Organiser really want?" — when recent research into the groups market will be among the topics discussed.

The temperature should be raised on Thursday during a question-and-answer session called "Burning Issues in Tourism". This follows on from the

▼ UK

CTC: nine more join

NINE more companies have joined the Coach Tourism Council since November, bringing the membership up to 173 — 107 operators, 65 suppliers and one advisory. The new members are J J Longstaff, of Dewsbury; Rover European, of Stroud; Fenn Holidays, of March; Holiday Inns Worldwide, Brussels; Tyrer Tours, of Colne; Harrison Holidays, of Kings Lynn; Huxley holidays, of Malpas; Yorkshire Traction, of Barnsley; and Scandinavian Seaways.

▼ UK

Show will feature latest leisure and holiday ideas

BANISH those Winter blues and push the boat out by organising a group visit to the National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show, at the Birmingham NEC.

More than 400 exhibitors will be at the show, which will feature the latest in leisure and holidays ideas. The boat section will have every type of craft, while caravan

manufacturers will be showing the whole range, from fold-up caravans to a six-berth model with all mod-cons.

The tourism section is the biggest yet this year, with the British tourist boards joined by those from Austria, Denmark, France, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and The Grenadines.

The show will be

held from Saturday 17 February to Sunday 25 February and the doors will be open from 10am to 7pm daily.

Admission is £7.50 for adults and £4 for children from four to 15.

There are discounts for parties of 15 or more. For more details contact the organisers, *Birmingham Post and Mail* (Exhibitions) Ltd, on 0121 234 5257.

▼ UK

Bargains in Buxton

ANYONE with an eye for a bargain should head for Buxton in early Summer when the Derbyshire town holds the 32nd Buxton Antiques Fair in the Pavilion Gardens. There will be a wide range of objets d'art on sale and full catering facilities. Groups qualify for special admission rates. Call 01483 422562 for more details.

▼ UK

Edinburgh to get improved tourist route

A NEW tourist coach route is being planned for Edinburgh, which will create drop-off points in Market Street and improve access to the existing New Street coach park. At the same time, a strategy is to be drawn up for the environmental improvement and development of the area encompassing Waverley Bridge and Market Street/East Market Street.

Engineering consultants Oscar Faber, in conjunction with EDAW CR Planning, has been commissioned to study the coach route and identify ways in which the full potential of the area can be developed.

Lothian Regional Council, which has identified a preferred coach route linking Castle Esplanade with the New Street coach park, is collaborating in the study with the Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise, Edinburgh District Council and the Old Town Renewal Trust.



All lit up: fireworks at the Royal Armouries

▼ UK

All bright on the night...

IT was all bright on the night when heritage secretary Virginia Bottomley performed the official lighting-up ceremony at the Yorkshire Electricity Hall of Steel at the Royal Armouries in Leeds. This was followed by a spectacular rooftop firework display.

Mrs Bottomley went on a short tour of the site and visited War, the largest of the five themed galleries at the £42.5 million attraction, which will depict the history of arms and armour over 3,000 years.

The Hall of Steel, which is a 37-metre-high octagonal glass and stainless steel tower, is the focal point for the museum and will house more than 3,000 pieces of arms and armour dating from the 17th to 19th centuries. It is part of Yorkshire Electricity's £1.5 million sponsorship of the Royal Armouries, which will be officially opened by The Queen on 15 March. The gates will open to the public on Saturday 30 March.

seminars planned for BTTF

heated debates which packed the conference room last year. The session is again being sponsored by The Tourism Society, which is putting together a line-up of travel industry speakers.

Later that day, the profitability of UK coach tours and excursions will come under scrutiny in a

seminar sponsored by the Coach Tourism Council and the Confederation of Passenger Transport. "Coach Tours — Where do the Profits Lie?" will be chaired by Ron Whittle, of Go Whittle, current CPT president.

Admission to seminars and workshops is free but places must be booked

in advance through Maggie Healey, BTTF, on 0181 910 7961 (fax 0181 910 7879).

● The BTTF will be held at the NEC in Birmingham on Wednesday and Thursday, 27 and 28 March. Order your complimentary tickets by calling the hotline on 01844 262728, quoting BTTF/COL.



David Stamp: 'coach tour ops felt left out'

▼ Europe

Night Express firm is sold to management

Alan Birch heads former Airtours operation

SUN Express, the night express coach brand axed by Airtours last June, has been sold in a management buyout to a team headed by Alan Birch, the man brought in specifically to set up the coach operation.

The deal was finalised last week and Mr Birch, who was operations manager and now becomes md of Sun Express, said holidays would be sold direct to the public. Plans were also being formulated to set up working partnerships with a number of selected independent travel agents.

"Airtours and some very dedicated staff took the coach shuttle business to a

by William Golden

higher level," said Mr Birch. "I intend to continue their lead and increase the quality while still offering budget-priced holidays.

"Standards in this sector are now improving and I'd like to think Airtours, with Sun Express, had something to do with this.

"Now we have to keep the pressure up for improved transport, staff, operations and accommodation.

"Our goals are total customer satisfaction and increased customer loyalty."

Matthew Cheetham, product director of Airtours

Holidays and former md of Sun Express, said: "The Sun Express product was very successful in the two seasons that it operated under Airtours, but it was never going to be a growth product and did not really fit in with Airtours' long-term strategy.

"Alan Birch had the responsibility to make it work and I am happy that he will now be responsible for its continued success in the market."

Disappointing sales were cited by Airtours, which is the UK's second largest tour operator, to drop Sun Express after the 1995 Summer programme.

▼ Europe

Day trips to France for 50p per head

COACH groups are being offered day trips to France from as little as 50p a head by Stena Line in a move to help compete with national newspaper promotions.

The ferry operator is also offering special rates for on-board meals and discounts on duty-free goods.

David Stamp, Stena's national sales manager, said: "Coach tour operators have felt left out in the cold by big national newspaper promotions. Our response is to launch our best coach rates ever, with day trip fares for just £65 per coach and 50p per passenger on our Dover-Calais and Newhaven-Dieppe routes until the

end of February, and £1 per passenger in March.

"On selected sailings from Dover, breakfast is available to groups for just £1 a head, while two for the price of one fish and chip dinners are being offered from Dover and Newhaven.

"In addition, a 10 per cent discount across our entire range of more than 2,000 items in our tax and duty-free shops is available on off-peak sailings. Taken all together, this has to be the best offer we have made to any sector of the market."

● Contact Stena Line's coach and groups sales department on 01233 647022 for more details.

CBW



WEATHER

DIESEL PRICES

HOLIDAY POUND

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
				(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)							
Athens	2C/36F	Madrid	11C/52F	Austria	0.59	Netherlands	0.56	Austria	15.30 Sch/£	Italy	2,385 Lire/£
Amsterdam	1C/34F	Oslo	-3C/27F	Belgium	0.57	Norway	0.73	Belgium	44.75 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.45 Gld/£
Berlin	-4C/25F	Paris	2C/36F	Eire	0.59	Poland	0.25	Denmark	8.45 K/£	Norway	9.60 Nkr/£
Brussels	6C/43F	Rome	10C/50F	France	0.53	Portugal	0.48	Eire	0.95 Punt/£	Portugal	226.5 Es/£
Dublin	10C/50F	Stockholm	0C/32F	Germany	0.52	Spain	0.50	France	7.42 Fr/£	Spain	183 Pta/£
Lisbon	13C/55F	Vienna	-5C/23F	Italy	0.58	Sweden	0.68	Germany	2.19 DM/£	Sweden	10.10 SKr/£
Luxembourg	-2C/28F	Zurich	1C/34F	Luxembourg	0.47	Switzerland	0.69	Greece	365 D/£	Switzerland	1.74 SFr/£

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Q Is it legal for a driver on in-scope work to start at 8am one day, not finish until 11.50pm and then start at 8am the next? The pattern of driving and rest starting from 8am was this: driving 10 minutes, break 21 minutes, driving 35 minutes, break 3½ hours, driving 45 minutes, break two hours 19 minutes, driving one hour 20 minutes, break 27 minutes, driving two hours three minutes, break 20 minutes, driving four hours until finish at 11.50pm and then off until 8am next morning. If the last spell of driving had been 4½ hours, would that make a difference?

AL, Kent

a I am assuming that duty commenced after a daily or weekly rest period. There is a total of eight hours 43 minutes driving against a normal daily limit of nine hours (or 10 twice in any fixed week) between two daily rest periods (or a daily and weekly rest period).

Driving is inside the permitted maximum. My next check is for breaks in a maximum period of 4½ hours continuous driving. The first 21-minute break is irrelevant as it is overtaken by the next one - of 3½ hours.

Once a minimum of at least 45 minutes break has been taken (en-block or made up of qualifying segments) the clock begins to run again. Consequently it can be started for the second time in the day after the break of two hours 19 minutes.

The next block of work comprises one hour 20 minutes plus two hours and three minutes of driving which was broken with a 27-minute break and then followed by 20 minutes. This total of 47 minutes is more than the required 45 so, once again, the count of continuous driving begins afresh. In fact, it was only for four hours and then duty finished. There is thus compliance with the law on breaks in continuous driving.

Any break which is of an hour or more can also count as a rest period. Thus the eight hours 10 minutes between finishing this day's work and starting the next does not have to be broken down to comprise 45 minutes break and then the remainder as rest; the two run concurrently. This is just as well for, to be used as part of a split daily rest, the rest between one day's work and the next has to be at least eight hours long. At eight hours 10 minutes it qualifies with 10 minutes to spare.

Where daily rest is split as well as the last block being of at least eight hours there must be one or two rest periods earlier in the day. These must be of at least one hour long and give a total of at least 12 hours rest in the day.

In your example, the 3½ hours plus two hours 19 minutes plus the eight hours 10 minutes gives just a minute short of a total of 14 hours. With no problems on this, the schedule appears quite legal.

You would have been in trouble had the working day ended with 4½ hours of driving for, although this may still be within the daily driving



Questions & Answers

limit, there would not have been the necessary eight hours rest before work commenced on the next day.

This would be an offence. Even if work did not start until later on the second day - or even if an unbroken daily or weekly rest period followed the 4½ hours driving - it would still be illegal. For the fact is that a 'day' for these purposes is not a calendar day, but a maximum period of 24 hours and within that 'day' there must be a complete daily rest period, whether unbroken or split.

For the schedule you have outlined to be accomplished legally at least eight hours of a split daily rest has to be taken within, and at the end of, the 24-hour period from when the driver started work at 8am, ie by 8am the next day. He, therefore, would have to finish work by midnight at the latest. Put simply: the maximum 'spread-over' when utilising split daily rest is 16 hours (24 minus eight).

Q You have recently answered questions about when it is necessary to display an O-licence disc. Vehicles of our county council's in-house operation may be seen one day displaying an O-licence disc, the next day displaying a Section 19 permit

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o Coach and Bus Week, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154

Marksman will answer more questions on 10 February 1996

disc and the following day both - or neither! Can you comment on this interesting scenario?

BG, Lincs

a If you went back a little further you would discover you are not the first operator in your area to pose this question. Licence discs, whether PSV O-licences, Section 19 or Community Bus Permits might be seen as the flags which have to be flown to show the public, other operators and the enforcement agencies under which authority the vehicle is sailing.

Local authorities are under the same obligation to obey this law as the rest of us and should display a valid disc correct for the operation being undertaken when carrying passengers on a PCV. I am fascinated by the point about displaying two different discs at the same time. While I cannot see any specific PSV legislation which would make this an offence, it clearly thwarts the purpose of the discs - flagging up for the world to see the applicable mode of operation.

It is on a par with a ship sailing under more than one national flag, or of you putting a multiplicity of different number plates on your vehicles so no one could work out which was the real one. I would, therefore, think some sort of deception charge should be possible. Record in the fullest detail (date, time, place, registration number and witnesses) the occurrence of the events which you describe and send copies to the police and the Traffic Area Office.

Q You have referred to the Code of Practice for in-service checks on PCVs. We have not had a copy of this. Can you advise on its ISBN reference or otherwise regarding its availability, please?

JRS, Somerset

a I received one of my copies from a contact in the Vehicle Inspectorate and another from CPT. I presumed they were generally available to operators. There is no ISBN number, price, or any other identifying leaflet number shown. You do, however, have the title correct. It comprises 18 pages of A4 stapled between card covers and bears the legend Produced by the Vehicle Inspectorate in Association with The Department of Transport and is dated November 1993. I hope this gives you sufficient leads to obtain a copy. It may currently be the subject of revision. One of the concerns I and others have is the recommended maximum delay of 30 minutes for a spot check where no problems are identified. This is too much as it enables the police to queue vehicles.

It would be better if the code expressed a maximum time, say five minutes, between a vehicle being stopped and an inspection being started. There is also a view that the code should apply to all PSVs, for delays in meeting scheduled times are likely if vehicles not 'in service' are delayed for abnormally long periods.

CBW



Home wanted for OB

WANTED — a good home for Ray Butcher's cherished Bedford OB and others in his Bee Style heritage coach fleet.

Believed to be the oldest of two surviving Plaxton-bodied OBs, this 29-seat machine has graced the showrooms at Plaxton's Eastfield plant in recent years and has spent periods on loan to coach dealerships but is now in need of a new safe haven.

First registered by Howards of Whitby in April 1948, it has chassis number OB68823 and body number 698.

It was withdrawn from PSV use in 1976 but spent its entire life in Yorkshire until bought by Mr Butcher of Bee Style, Manchester in 1989.

Bee Style, which built up a collection of historic coaches for its abortive plans for nostalgia coach tours around Manchester, refurbished the OB and had it recertified in 1990.

Other vehicles in the fleet include the 1950 Burlingham Seagull immortalised by Corgi, similar 1955 Reliance, 1956 Tiger Cub, a Bedford J2, etc.

Mr Butcher would like to hear from anyone prepared to make a sensible offer (in the region of £18,000 for the OB) for either individual vehicles or the entire collection.

Alternatively he would be interested in offers of safe, secure accommodation. Give Mr Butcher a ring on 0161 445 2424.



The oldest surviving Plaxton-bodied OB?

History of an operator

A FINE little book worth adding to your library charts the history of Reading operator Chiltern Queens. The 36-page, black and white volume written by Graham Stone and John Whitehead follows the 40-year history of the

company, with the inevitable fleet lists thrown in for good measure. *Chiltern Queens - 40 Years of Service* is £3.50 plus 50p postage from Chiltern Queens Ltd, Longtoll, Woodcote, Reading RG8 0RP.

Public transport rules, OK

THE Swiss city of Zurich is claiming to be the most public transport-orientated city in the world.

Each of its citizens take 470 trips on bus, train and light rail every year.

Average bus frequency on each route is eight minutes. Where road is shared, public transport has absolute priority for unhindered runs, but oddly, car traffic is still increasing.

CBW



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**1989 (F)
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ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma retarder, Autolube, 53 reclining seats including seat belts, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, radio/PA/system **choice of 24**, 10 blue moquette, 14 brown/orange moquette.

**1990 (G)
VOLVO B10M
VAN HOOL ALIZEE**

ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma retarder, Autolube, 49 reclining seats & crew seat, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, radio/PA/system **choice of 2** brown/orange moquette.

**1991 (H)
VOLVO B10M MKIII
VAN HOOL ALIZEE**

ZF HP5000 Automatic gearbox, ABS, Autolube, 49 reclining seats including seats belts & crew seat, centre continental door, double glazed side windows with blinds courier seat, mid section servery/fridge & toilet, radio/PA/system **choice of 11**, brown/orange moquette

1992 (J) SCANIA ELITE K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

7 speed manual GR801 comfort shift gearbox, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, kneel facility, ferry lift, autolube, electric retarder, Webasto heating, inswinging entrance door. Central continental door, centre toilet, half rear emergency door, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation aircraft lockers, crew compartment, grey moquette, 49 reclining seats, centre gangway carpet, double glazed, side curtains, rear curtains, side blinds, aluminium wheels, Blaupunkt radio/PA system. MOT: 13.09.96

1992 (J) NEOPLAN CITYLINER K116/3 TRIAXLE

Mercedes V8 Twin turbo engine ZF 8 speed gearbox, rear wheel steer, 48 reclining seats, double courier seat, seat belts, seat back tables & nets, Telma retarder, Sutrak air conditioning, Webasto, double glazed windows, 2 x monitors and video, toilet, curtains, safe, cruise control, walk in kitchen, fridge microwave, percolated coffee machine, radio/PA/cassette, drivers sleeping cabin, adjustable foot rests, double, o/s continental door, large water tanks, alarm. MOT: 2.2.96

1989 (F) VOLVO B10MT PLAXTON 4000 RS

65 reclining seats, TV/Video Stereo, toilet, double glazing, sun blinds, curtains, carpets, drinks, fridge, drivers bunk, crew seat, Telma retarder, brown/orange chevron moquette, curtains, exterior all white. MOT: 25.02.96

1989 (F) MAN (16290) JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE

6 speed ZF gearbox, 49 reclining seats, Sutrak air conditioning, double glazing o/s/r floor mounted toilet, curtains, radio/PA/Cassette Telma retarder, brown stripe interior, curtains, exterior all white. MOT: 24.01.96

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LETTER OF THE WEEK



Safety campaign would get enthusiastic support

From Peter White

Pat Harris (*CBW*, 20 January) asks for coach operators to support BUSK. I would find it hard, if not impossible, to back an organisation which appears to attract and condone so much emotional kneejerk and, frankly, illogical thinking on the important subject of safety.

I agree with Mrs Harris that, if organisations like BUSK could work with (and not against) the industry, things would get better overnight. Would BUSK, instead of promoting the current madness in legislation (outside lane ban, pointless and destructive of the industry, lunatic seatbelt legislation; at best pointless and at worst dangerous), consider a safety-related campaign based on:

1. Banning the transport of children to and from school by car, thus saving real (not "political" lives) and increasing the use of safe and reliable public transport — as opposed to the car, which is neither!
2. Campaigning for realistic LEA contracts which specify good quality service (and, therefore, good quality prices) and a ban on lowest-cost bidding. This will, of course, involve

spending on education budgets and, therefore, increased local and national taxation.

3. Road pricing (or a substantially higher tax on fuel) for all vehicles to discourage private motoring and enhance the environment, to reduce private travel and divert most to safer and environmentally less damaging public services.

4. To campaign for rigorous enforcement of speed limits for all vehicles, but particularly private cars and, furthermore, to campaign for the fitting of speed limiters and tachographs to private cars, thus allowing a restriction of drivers' hours.

5. To campaign for maximum penalties for parents who carry unbelted school children in their cars — leading to an automatic ban of, say, three years.

6. To campaign vigorously for clear and unequivocal standards for the fitting and use of seatbelts on all vehicles designed for the purpose and to provide the necessary state or local finance through increases in taxation to ensure that this is adequately researched and done quickly.

7. To campaign for the necessary finance to ensure that standards are upheld for the pri-

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Response Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 467154



The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your full name (ie first name and surname) and address for our information.



Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

vate car, lorries and PCVs — more vehicle inspections, more police and more frequent testing.

Such an onslaught on our political servants (they are not masters — we, corporately, elected them and can unelect them!) would save thousands of lives and contribute to a dramatic increase in the use of public transport.

Build your campaign on ALL of these — a real campaign for real safety — and support would be enthusiastic and automatic!

Peter White
Westbrook Travel
Isle of Wight

What about women?

From Anon

With reference to Diary (*CBW*, 13 January), I am sure many readers will be grateful for your handy tip on purchasing glamour calendars.

I hate to sound unappreciative but must confess that the particular image displayed did not "tempt my imagination" and neither do I have a wife.

I do, however, still have a space on my office wall and wonder if you could suggest a calendar for us members of the opposite sex.

Perhaps something with men wearing gold, in preference to women wearing silver, which naturally portrayed men's inner beauty? I wait in eager anticipation!

Name and address supplied

Speed limit law

From Colin Copelin

While I appreciate the sentiment behind your article "lane ban increases danger" (*CBW*, 6 January), I am writing to advise that I consider the last sentence to be technically incorrect. You say: "The EU-inspired limit does

not disguise the fact that speed limiters must, in fact, be set at 62.5 mph (100 km/hr)". While the EU directive 92/6/EEC might intend a setting of 100 km/hr, it is not "fact".

The statutory instrument which implements this directive into UK law is the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 1993 [SI1993: 3048] and requires an in-scope PSV first user on or after 1/1/88 to be fitted with a speed limiter which "must be so adjusted that the stabilised speed of the vehicle does not exceed 65mph."

The tolerance within the BS allows a higher set speed than 100 km/hr while remaining within the law with respect to stabilised speed.

I would suggest, therefore, that your last sentence would have been better written as a recommendation or including words such as "in practice" or "for practical purposes" rather than "fact".

If the UK law or DoT's interpretation changes, CPT will advise its members accordingly.

Colin Copelin
Technical executive
Confederation of Passenger Transport UK
Sardinia House
London WC2

A useful publication

From Norman Scott

I received the *Coach & Bus Guide 1996* recently with my copy of *Coach and Bus Week* and have already found it of great value. I congratulate you and your staff on producing a very useful publication.

Norman Scott
Mercury Travel
Loanhead
Midlothian

Entries for festival

From Ashley Lovering

I am organising a charity event, The Swansea Festival of Transport, for Sunday 23 June 1996. Entries are invited for among other things, coaches and buses. Entry forms can be obtained from:

Ashley Lovering
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1994 Dennis Javelin 240 Plaxton Premiere 320

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1994 Mercedes 814D Plaxton Beaver

Fitted with 33 seats, rear luggage boot, soft interior trim, coach door.

1993 Volvo B10M Plaxton Premiere 350

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1992 Volvo B10M Jonckheere

Fitted with 51 reclining seats with armrests, rear saloon toilet, double glazing, radio & P.A. system, TV & video, crew seat, water boiler and fridge.

1992 Leyland Tiger 290 CU Paramount 3500

Fitted with 49 reclining seats, fully automatic gearbox, Telma retarder, double glazing, rear sunken toilet, rear continental door, crew seat, TV and aircraft type lockers.

1991 Volvo B10M GL Plaxton Paramount 3500

Fitted with 49 reclining seats with armrests, centre demountable toilet, centre continental door, crew seat, blinds to windows, moquette to roof and aircraft lockers.

1991 Volvo B10M Plaxton Excalibur

Fitted with 48 reclining leather seats with armrests, centre demountable toilet, centre continental door, carpet to gangway, curtains, radio & P.A. system, Telma retarder and water boiler.

1991 Bova Futura

Fitted with 51 reclining seats with armrests, centre continental door, centre sunken toilet, water boiler, radio & P.A., crew seat, phone, curtains, moquette to roof, double glazing, drivers bunk.

1990 Volvo B10M GL Plaxton Paramount 3500

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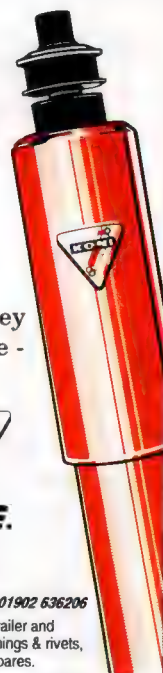
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With or without the Disability Discrimination Act, public transport is poised to make a stepless transition into the 21st Century. This CBW special feature looks at the latest moves to improve access on to coaches and buses

There is a very lucrative market in accessible transport that's too good to miss

Stepless transition

ACCESSIBILITY is moving from the fringe to the mainstream of coach and bus operation as awareness of the benefits to the operator percolate through the industry. Rather than take up a sheltered position as Cinderella of the PSV world, with operators putting their corporate toes in the water by converting older vehicles, the trend is increasingly to buy purpose-built machines.

Less than a decade ago it would be the norm for passengers with mobility difficulties to be relegated to an ambulance-type vehicle.

Indeed the word 'ambulance' would appear in big letters across the front of the transport selected for them. The vehicle would inevitably be painted white to reinforce their disadvantaged status.

But a growing number of coach operators have recognised that this specialist niche can bring its own rewards. Their efforts are encouraged by the knowledge that wheelchair-accessible coaches require an aptitude and expertise which is not common among competitors, while the customers

who experience the transition from converted bread van to luxury coach for their annual trip to the seaside, are quick to show their appreciation.

Meanwhile, low-floor buses herald a new era for bus passengers.

Until just over two years ago access meant special. The commendable growth in access services had provided work for fleets of high-floor minibuses with rear-end tail-lifts. Their work was funded by local authorities and the services commonly

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But this liberation for passengers with mobility difficulties emphasised the segregation of services. The debate about equality of opportunity for all passengers had begun and the drive towards provision of low-floor buses on local services was under way.

At first the industry was side-tracked into thinking that accessible vehicles were being pushed by lobby groups and well-intentioned politicians without regard for commercial implications. The vehicles were up to 20 per cent more expensive, seated fewer passengers and their operation was slower.

The whole scenario was less than encouraging until the light dawned and more economic alternatives started to filter into the marketplace.

Figures from the Transport Research Laboratory last year showed that Coastline's Wright Pathfinder-bodied Dennis Lance SLFs carried eight per cent more passengers and earned 14 per cent more revenue than the buses they replaced, without any discernible reduction in the use of other services in the area. They attracted regular numbers of wheelchair users and people with walking difficulties, but also are carrying twice as many parents with baby buggies - most of whom pay full fares.

Manufacturers have been quick to recognise the switch in thinking. Vehicles which are accessible are in demand. Not just full-size single decks, but midibuses such as the those

based on Dennis Dart SLF or Volvo B6LE and the new generation of integral buses from Optare and Marshall. Within three months of the launch at Coach & Bus 95 Dennis has orders for over 400 Dart SLFs.

Meanwhile, there's a reported shortage of vehicles for special education contracts (*CBW*, 13 January) — proof that demand for small accessible vehicles outstrips supply in an increasingly lucrative marketplace.

And if that wasn't enough to encourage operators who had hitherto been unconvinced of the merits of going accessible, don't forget that the Disability Discrimination Act is looming on the horizon.

This Act, which went on to the Statute Book on 8 November, is expected to come into force over the next two years.

In answer to a Parliamentary question, transport minister Steven Norris said the exact schedule for implementation of section 40 of the Act would be decided as discussion with public transport representatives got under way.

He said: "The timescale for introduction will be confirmed in the light of those discussions and when viable technical solutions to achieving accessibility are defined."

Consequently the precise implications for the industry are awaited but it is certain that it will add even further impetus to changes which will radically alter the face, or at least the floorline, of the British PSV industry.



Switch in thinking: accessible vehicles are in demand

Giving the volunteer sector some professional help

ALTHOUGH the rapid increase in access initiatives will improve mobility across the whole spectrum of coach and bus operation, the role of the community transport sector looks set to continue, with a large part of its funding coming from charitable contributions and its driving force largely made up of volunteers.

Despite the tightening of driver licensing regulations which comes into effect on 1 July (*CBW*, 13 January), these groups will continue to buy wheelchair accessible vehicles to open up opportunities for people with mobility difficulties which would not be viable for a commercial operator.

Recognition of the responsibilities placed on the hundreds of groups throughout the UK who make up this sector comes in the Community Transport Association's Minibus Safety Charter.

The charter expands the CTA's Code of Good Practice and gives sound advice geared to reducing the level of risk when non-PSV minibuses are used. Included is

advice on minibus design, seating, seatbelts, wheelchair restraints, fire hazards and drivers.

Because these vehicles are likely to be driven by people more accustomed to driving cars, it says:

- Drivers' hours regulations should be observed by all drivers
- Drivers should take planned breaks of 15 minutes every two hours
- Longer breaks should be planned when carrying children and there should be a second supervising adult
- Drivers should not drive long distances after a normal day's work
- Drivers should stop the vehicle at the earliest safe opportunity if they experience tiredness. Change drivers if necessary. Either drink two cups of strong coffee or have a short 15-minute break.

For copies of the report contact:
CTA UK, Highbank, Halton Street,
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CTA aims to advise volunteer drivers

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Ref: 6870 **£136,950**

1994 L Mercedes 814 Autobus Classique II, 33 seats,
Exterior White with Stripes, Interior Duo Grey with Red Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Tinted Windows, Curtains and Bristol Dome.
Ref: 6919 **£45,500**

1994 L Volvo B6 Caetano, 34 reclining seats,
Exterior Maroon, Interior Duo Grey & Red Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Twin Interior Mirrors and Footrests.
Ref: 6858 **£79,950**



1992 K Toyota Optimo Mk II Caetano, 21 fixed seats,
Exterior White & Orange, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Retarder, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Crew Seat and Black Carpet to Gangway.
Ref: 6888 **£35,500**

1991 H Toyota Optimo II Caetano, 18 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Retarder, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Crew Seat and Hot Water Boiler.
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Ref: 6826 **£22,500**

1982 Private Bedford YNT Plaxton Supreme VI, 53 seats
Exterior Duo Grey, Interior Multi Coloured Moquette, Driver Operated Door, Tinted Windows, Marble Gangway, Express Door and Bristol Dome.
Ref: 6821 **£9,500**

VOLVO



1994 L Volvo B10M Jonckheere 45, 49/53 reclining seats.
Exterior White, Interior Multi Moquette, Radio, PA, Stereo, W/Discs, Driver operated door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Sunken Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Soft Trim, Air Suspension.
Ref: 6620 **£138,950**



1993 K Volvo B10M Mk III Jonckheere Deauville 45, 50/53 reclining seats,
Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Brown Moquette, Radio, Pa, Stereo, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Telma, Side locker, Webasto, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door and Crew Seat. CHOICE OF VARIOUS SIMILAR COACHES
Ref: 6867 **£125,950**

1992 J Volvo B10M Jonckheere
Exterior White, Interior Blue Moquette, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Soft Trim, Tea Machine and TV and
Ref: 6670



1992 J Volvo B10M Van Hool,
Exterior White, Interior Grey, Red and Stereo, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Glazing, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Choice of Wiring for TV/Video. CHOICE OF VARIANTS
Ref: 6512



1991 H Volvo B10M Paramour
Exterior White, Interior Brown Striped Moquette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Tinted Windows, Tea Machine, Toilet, Tinted Windows
Ref: 6748

1990 G Volvo B10M Paramour
Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Water Boiler. CHOICE OF TWO (2) VARIANTS
Ref: 6776



1989 F Volvo B10M Paramour
Exterior White, Blue & Yellow, Interior Grey Moquette, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Side Locker, Toilet, Tinted Windows, Provision for Crew Compartment.
Ref: 6873

1989 Private Volvo B10M Dupont
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3500, 51/53 reclining seats,
Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Front
Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Curtains,
Continental Door and Crew Seat.

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3500, 49/53 reclining seats,
Radio, Pa, Cassette, Front Wheel
Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Tinted
Crew Seat, Wiring for TV/Video and Hot
SIMILAR VEHICLES

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3500, 49 reclining seats,
Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette,
Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake,
Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat and

£74,250

320, 53 reclining seats,
Interior Grey, Black, Red Striped
Driver Operated Door, Exhaust

Brake, Side Locker, Top Mounted Toilet, Tinted Windows, Crew Seat, Blue
Gangway and Soft Trim.

Ref: 6347

£57,950

1987 D Volvo B10M Paramount 3500, 49/53 reclining seats,
Exterior White, Interior Brown Striped Moquette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver
Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Webasto, Tinted
Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Aircraft Lockers and Drinks
Machine.

Ref: 6286

£54,950



1987 D Volvo B10M Paramount 3500, 49/51 reclining seats,
Exterior Grey, Red and Blue, Interior Grey & Red Moquette, Radio, Pa,
Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Exhaust Brake, Side
Locker, Toilet, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Crew Seat and
Twin Driver fans.

Ref: 6909

£55,750

LEYLAND

1990 G Leyland Tiger (Cummins 290) Paramount 3500,
49 reclining seats,

Exterior White, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Stereo, Driver
Operated Door, Telma, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows,
Webasto, Curtains, Continental Door, Crew Seats, Crew Compartment, Soft
Trim, Aircraft Lockers and Wiring for TV/Video.

Ref: 6574

£75,250



1990 G Leyland Tiger Paramount 3200, 53 reclining seats,
Exterior White & Brown, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel
Discs, Driver Operated Door, Telma, Side Locker, Tinted Windows, Curtains
and Crew Seat.

Ref: 6900

£71,500



1989 F Leyland Tiger Duple 320, 53 reclining seats,
Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Brown Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver
Operated Door, Telma, Side Locker, Double Glazing and Tinted Windows.

Ref: 6724

£49,950

DENNIS

1993 K Dennis Javelin Premiere, reclining seats,

Exterior Red and Cream, Interior Brown Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette,
Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker,
Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door and Crew Seat.
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seater

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1992 J Scania K113 Premiere 350, 49 reclining seats,

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Stereo, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Telma, Side Locker,
Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Crew
Seat, Crew Compartment, Soft Trim, Fridge, Hot Water Boiler, Footrests,
Wire for TV/Video and Alloy Wheels.

Ref: 6668

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MERCEDES/MAN

1993 K Mercedes OH16 28 Jonckheere Deauville 45L,
49 reclining seats,

Exterior Green, Yellow, Orange and Brown, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio,
Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker,
Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Continental Door, Crew Seat,
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1985 Private Neoplan Merc V10 Plaxton 400,
53 upper and 18 lower seats,

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1987 D Integral Duple 425, 46 reclining seats,

Exterior White, Interior Brown Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Stereo, Plug
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CRYSTALS takes the mobility market very seriously, even having its own schools and accessible transport expert, David McKinless.


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The range on offer from Crystals is almost limitless. At one end of the scale are small, van-based conversions, chassis-cowl conversions such as the Transit-based Challenger and, at the other extreme, the 33-seat, coachbuilt Mercedes 814D.

Councils and health authorities are among Crystals' customers, ordering vehicles with tail-lifts - Crystals can fit all major brands - or Renault and Peugeot conversions with kneeling suspension.

Crystals is particularly proud of its build quality, and operates on 'open door' policy at the factory. It also has a policy of fitting only M2 crash-tested seats with inertia belts.

The sales staff are Harry Mitchell, at the 40,000 square foot factory, and David Broad at Dartford. Sales engineer Ray Lingford and accessible expert David McKinless are at Doncaster.

 For further information you can contact Crystals on 01302 328888.

Crystals: successfully building on its reputation for build quality and safety


Small Transits - big market

DEANS_GATE Quality Conversions is finding a ready market for its range of small Ford Transit conversions.

The Manchester-based company can convert any make of van, but its adaptable Transit Kombi-based conversion with its M1 certification is finding takers with loads as varied as able-bodied passengers with luggage, to wheelchair passengers.

At the lower end of the seating scale is the Taxi - a Transit-based conversion with either eight seats or six plus space for a wheelchair. Telescopic ramps allow for wheelchair loading.

The Trafford uses a 150 LWB Transit to squeeze in up to 14 seats, or 10 seats plus space for two wheelchairs. As with other conversions, it uses Unwin tracking with Kwiklocks so seats can be moved and replaced quickly with wheelchair clamping. A Henderson Hide-a-way tail-lift provides convenient loading of wheelchairs.

 For more information contact Deansgate on 0161 877 4884.

Flexible friend is a success

ONE of the best-known conversion and coachbuilding specialists, Devon Conversions, has 38 years' experience under its belt.

The Exeter firm puts the emphasis on a combination of tailor-made interiors, built to order, and adaptability of the finished product. Given the investment costs of accessible vehicles, it maintains that flexibility can be the key to turning in a profit.

Devon can convert vehicles from all the major manufacturers - Volkswagen, Mercedes and Renault being the frontrunners. But its own Devon Exe coachbuilt vehicle, based on a Ford 230 chassis with stainless steel framework, offers up to 16 seats and a huge variety of options from ramps to tail-lifts.

One of Devon Conversions' claims to fame is that it supplies vehicles to charity groups such as Help the Aged and, given that the groups should know what they want, that's a good recommendation.

 Contact Devon Conversions on 01392 211611.



Devon Conversions: building interiors to order

BUS FAIR?



At recent fuel trials carried out by the British Bus Group, one of the group's MAN 11.190's clearly demonstrated the model's fuel saving characteristics by decisively outperforming its two major competitors.

With fuel prices easily the largest single running cost for today's operators, the MAN 11.190's performance can provide *significant* savings for any operation - particularly when considered over the working life of an MAN chassis.

For more information on how MAN's fuel efficient vehicles can cut *your* organisation's operating costs, simply call Richard Noy at MAN on FREEFONE 0800 378605.

You have nothing to lose but excessive fuel bills - which makes MAN buses a very 'fair' proposition indeed!

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Giving people a lift



Ratcliff's RS250/1 stows as the first step in the Airbus Olympian's entrance

WHEELCHAIR lifts for coaches and buses can be underfloor, two step or one step, depending on type of vehicle and lift location. Ratcliff of Welwyn Garden City can supply all three.

Operated by one small, hand-held, two-button control, its RUL300A automatic under-floor lift was launched last October and is available from the end of this month.

Ratcliff claims the RUL300A is simple and easy to use and is suitable for a wide range of factory-built minibus conversions and coach-built bodies. Its strong platform is only 22mm thick, the 200kg unit is sealed from road dirt.

A two-step RVP300A lift has been specified for two distinctly different vehicle types run on services funded by Stirling District Council and Central Regional Council. Optare MetroRiders serve the fixed regular Easy Border routes and one of the most unusual applications is in the centre door of an open-top Heritage Tours bus operated in Stirling during the Summer.

However, a higher profile application is on the new Volvo Olympian/Alexander Royale Airbus double deckers recently added to the London United fleet. This RS250/1 unit eliminates the need for a dedicated entry door on the Olympians. It stows as the first step in the entrance and is easily deployed to lift format with 250kg capacity.

For more information about tail-lifts, contact Ratcliff on 01707 325571.

Newcomer suits conversions down to the ground

THE Jany Scandinavia Safety Seat is a newcomer to the marketplace built in Denmark by Jany Scandinavia Autotextiles and sold by GB agent, Ivan Buckland of Dartmouth.

Tested by TuV to M1/20g standards, the seat is designed for accessible minibus applications and is marketed as a safety system suitable for conversions.

A quick release allows the seat to be removed or re-positioned, the keyholes in the floorplate being suitable for securing wheelchairs.

M1 approval for Ford Transits is expected to be followed by Mercedes-Benz Sprinter and the Sevel-bodied Peugeot, Citroen, Fiat range.

For more information about the new seat, contact Ivan Buckland on 01803 835255.

Strong marketing

JAVELIN of Glasgow claims to be selling the "strongest and most compact fully-automatic lift of its kind available in the UK."

It has launched the Swedish-built UVL under-vehicle passenger lift which combines high-lift capacity (350kg) with low net weight (114kg) and slim construction (130mm).

A fully-enclosed weatherproof cassette houses the lift which has zinc-plated steel construction and aluminium platform. Standard features include push-button control, roll-stop barrier and twin handrails with safety guards.

The lift comes with 12-month warranty and is supported by 35 UK service companies.

For more details contact Javelin on 01360 770277.

Catering for every need

CHANGES in vehicle design to accept wheelchairs have brought new demands for collapsible seating to maintain flexibility of passenger accommodation.

Over the last 12 to 18 months Restall of Smethwick has developed a number of seats for major bus builders in the UK. These include a tip-up seat ideal for mounting in the wheelchair parking area of low-floor buses and a high-back seat with three-point seatbelt mountings.

Contact Restall sales manager Philip Smart on 0121 558 4761 or fax 0121 555 5524.



Restall's tip-up seat gives space flexibility

It's easy to Promise

Nothing's easier than making a promise you know you can't keep.
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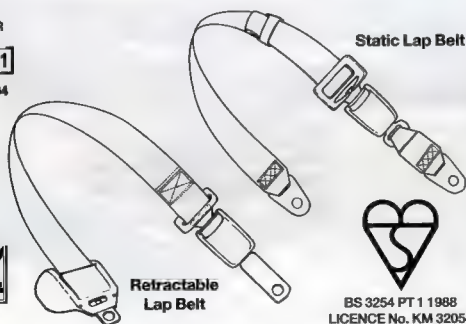
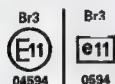
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Wrights works with the Transport Research Lab to find workable accessibility

Developing the Wright way

THE big challenge in the accessible market is making service buses available for all levels of physically-handicapped people... something which may reduce the need for so many special needs dedicated services.

The very real prospect of accessible service buses was anticipated some time ago by Robert Wright, and now the Northern Ireland-based bus builder leads the field.

Wrights has supplied more coachbuilt midi and full-sized accessible buses to the UK than anyone else, starting with its Pathfinder product in 1993 and bringing a new low-floor product to the market almost every year since. Using a combination of commonality in parts and the Alusuisse bolt-together structure, its vehicles are highly serviceable.

In 1996, Wrights' recognition of the strength of the market is such that it expects most of its production to be low-floor vehicles. And it is the first to acknowledge that legislation originating in Europe has gener-

ated much of the market.

"Operators recognise that, as the DoT is negotiating a specification and phasing-in date with operators for all new city buses to have step-free entrances, it will follow that there will also be a phasing-out of buses with steps, especially for tendered services in London and other large cities," said chief executive William Wright.

The key to his mainstream bus market was accessibility without wheelchair clamping, so Wrights worked closely with the Transport Research Laboratory to find safe and simple ways of restraining them. The eventual result is a backward-facing position with head restraint and a stanchion to protect them from sudden movement.

It's not just a theoretical solution, either. Wrights invited wheelchair users to its factory to use mock-ups of the design until such point as they were satisfied with it. Development is still going on.

Contact Robert Wright of Ballymena on 01266 41212.

Personal touch

A SUCCESSFUL Coach and Bus 95 show and a full order book have encouraged Cymric Conversions to move house.

The Welsh accessible vehicle specialist was getting cramped in its 4,000 sq ft unit in Kidwelly, Dyfed, so moved into 13,000 sq ft of space at Burry Port. The move has meant breathing space for the eight staff... and room for more.

"We just outgrew the old premises," manager Barry John said. "We had such a good Coach & Bus 95 that we booked into Expocoach just before all the stand space went. We seem to have what many operators want."

What Cymric has, in fact, is the personal touch. Not only are all staff taken 'raw' and trained by Mr Johns and his existing crew, but the customers get the same individual treatment.

"This is still a family business. When I get an inquiry, I like to talk everything through with the customer and invite the customer down to see their vehicle in build," said Mr Johns. Cymric Conversions is a trading arm of one of the best-known car franchises in the area, Gravells Group, which deals with Renault.

Cymric has secured orders from councils as far afield as Scotland and Liverpool, and from charities such as the Cheshire Foundation.

Contact Cymric Conversions on 01554 835900

Choice is yours

WITH second-hand accessible vehicles sprinkled lightly around dealers' yards throughout Britain, HW Pickrell is the only firm dealing exclusively with the second-hand mobility market.

The Billericay-based dealership sources most of its second-hand vehicles direct from local authorities and other corporate users, then strips them of their worn components.

"They can be everything, from frontline emergency ambulances downwards," said sales director Chris Jeakins. "We completely empty them of anything worn, and replace whatever the customer wants."

Pickrell's vehicles are universally offered with a 12-month guarantee, repainted, fully serviced and AA inspected before dispatch. It's something many cash-strapped organisations have used to their advantage...not only in Britain but in India and Africa, to which Pickrell's has exported a number of vehicles.

It's all about choice, says Mr Jeakins. Customers generally have around 50 buses to choose from, and virtually any interior design they care to order.

Contact HW Pickrell on 01268 521033





MELLOR

County orders Renault Messengers for OAPs

FOUR Mellor Coachcraft-bodied Renault Messengers are on order for Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Each will have 16 seats, with some removable to make space for up to three wheelchairs. Ricon tail-lifts will be fitted to each bus.

The new Messengers will be used to take old people to and from day centres

With some 175 Renaults in its 500-vehicle fleet, Dumfries and Galloway Council is one of Renault's larger municipal customers.

Meanwhile, Rochdale-based Mellor is set to take a larger share of the accessible and minibus market following a

complete reorganisation of its selling operation and revised product line-up (CBW, 20 January).

Peter Winrow heads up the new sales team, which includes John Silman, Colin Docking and Mike Parker.

Product developments centre around new and improved one-piece roof structures and skirts, extensive use of anti-corrosion materials such as Cromwell in frameworks, and increased emphasis on mechanical service access and the ease of operational reparability to bodywork and wearing surfaces considered essential to stage-carriage operations.

PLAXTON

Shaw Hadwin new with Prem

by Mike Morgan

SHAW Hadwin is celebrating 1996 by putting its fourth N-reg coach on the road and a move to new premises on a three-acre site next to M6 junction 35A at Carnforth.

Sales director, John Shaw, said new maintenance facilities had already been commissioned, with centralising repairs and servicing for the company's main fleet based at Silverdale and its subsidiaries, Hadwin, Lonsdale and Browns.

Mr Shaw says that the new workshops are ideally situated for operators needing back-up while on or near the M6 in Lancashire or Cumbria. Consequently the

Plus move to new company will be maintenance back-

company will be accepting commercial business just as soon as the move is complete.

Transfer of administration and stores to a purpose-built three-storey office block is almost complete while Silverdale and Lonsdale fleets will move to Carnforth over the next week.

The Browns vehicles are out-stationed on rented parking at Windermere and the 20-vehicle Hadwin fleet runs out of Dalton-



SALVADOR CAETANO

More choose Optimo

OPERATORS adding the ever-popular Toyota Optimo III mid-coach to their fleet from supplier, Salvador Caetano UK, include Cozy's of Letchworth, Chambers of Stevenage and Execubus of High Wycombe.

Hertfordshire operators, Cozy's and Chambers, both called for a coach fitted with 21 fixed seats in standard-trim interior of its Caetano coachwork.

As with all Optimos the

specification includes big-coach features: power plug door; tinted single-glazed windows with full-draw curtains; individual reading lights; forced-air ventilation; Blaupunkt stereo; soft trim; and centre gangway carpet.

However, the vehicle for Execubus came with extras — hot water boiler and cooler box — fitted for its work befitting the company name, executive private hire.



ings in ieres

premises means
able to provide
for other operators

in-Furness.

Meanwhile, activity on the vehicle front focused on the Shaw Hadwin show coach on the Plaxton stand at Coach & Bus 95.

This 49-seat 350 Premiere on Volvo B10M chassis was registered to go on the road for the first time this month. It joins a similar vehicle delivered in September last year and is complemented this week by another two.

One of the four was deliv-



ered with 53 recliners but has since been converted to 46-seat Rapide spec with the addition of a

servery and is to be found working the Blackpool to Eastbourne 570 National Express diagram with a

K-reg Van Hool. The spec on the show coach is matched by the other pair.

AUTOBUS CLASSIQUE

Award-winning Nouvelle joins Neal's Travel fleet

NEAL'S Travel of Isleham, Cambridgeshire has taken delivery of an award-winning Autobus Clas-

Benz midicoach — its fourth Autobus vehicle in three years.

Built on M-B 814D chassis/cowl, the Nouvelle won Midi

Coach of the Year at last year's Coach Industry Awards.

The air-conditioned vehicle for Neal's has been built to

Executif specification and features high-back coach seats incorporating lap and diagonal retractable seatbelts (tested to M2 standard), full curtains, and Blaupunkt stereo/PA.

Luggage capacity is enhanced to 3.6 cubic metres with the large boot option on the 29-seat coach together with its two side lockers.

The latest vehicle, supplied by Carriageways of Bedford, joins two Mercedes-Benz 410Ds and a 33-seat 814D Classique I. It will operate on airport transfers and other executive private hire, including Continental work, taking full advantage of the rack-fed air-conditioning.

Director, Lionel Neal, said the company had expanded to 18 vehicles since its move to larger premises three years ago. Although predominantly focused on minis and midis, the operation includes a rear-engined MAN 11.190 33-seater and two DAF 53-seaters — a size of vehicle inconceivable while the business operated from its former operating base.

CBW



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BEDFORD

1979 PLAXTON SUPREME
500, 53 str, MoT January '97,
taxed.....£4,500 ono

1983 PLAXTON PARA-
MOUNT 500 TURBO, 53 str,
MoT March '97, taxed ..£14,500

Further details ring
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(61761/BED)

PLAXTON BEDFORD, 1980, average
condition, 56 seater converted to 28
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53 re-trimmed seats + courier,
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must be seen.

£21,000 ono + VAT

*Good clean Bedford
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(61815/BOV)

DAF

DAF SB 2300 Duple 320

1989 'F', 57 seats, Telma,
double glazed, ZF Splitter
gearbox, radio/PA,
MoT 12/96

£35,000 + VAT

Contact: P Hatherell
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01275 851121

(61698/DAF)

1987 MB230 PLAXTON 3500

PP, choice of 2. 51(r) plus courier, toilet, video,
PA, Telma, recently refurbished by Plaxtons.

Exterior: All panels renewed and painted
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Interior: Seating, full roof and racks
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Toilet: Interior and exterior walls recovered,
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MoT's: 27/3/96 & 08/12/96

Cost: £55,000

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(61719/DAF)

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Private plated - April 1983

53 reclining seats, wired for
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DAF MB200 Plaxton 3200

57 seater, splitter box, power door,
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seats recovered 18 months ago,
good condition, tested September 1996

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(Derby/Notts)

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Coach and Bus Week ending 27 January 1996

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FORD R1114, Moseley Alpha, 1980, 53
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sound, very good interior, 12 months
MoT, **£3,500 + VAT. Tel. 01992 572409.**

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some with air conditioning,
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1987 MERCEDES 609, 18 seats, van doors, would suit tail-lift

1994 MERCEDES 208 TRAVELINER, 12 seater, very clean, low mileage

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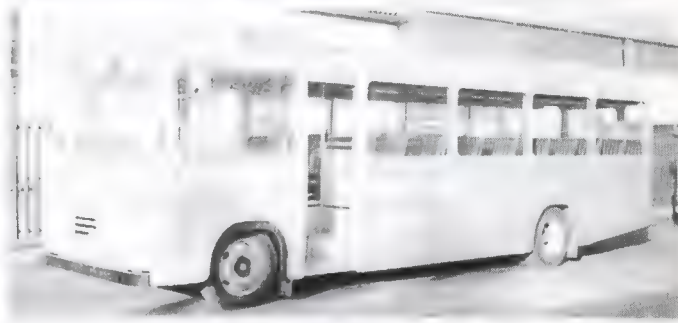
LEYLAND TIGER, Ex-MoD, 54 seats, Wadham Stringer body, into service 1986, low mileage, new tac-limiter, high back leather seats, 2 PAS/entrance, PSV to Jan '97 **POA**



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88 LEYLAND SWIFT, 32 coach + wheelchair lift.

88 TRANSIT, 14 diesel PSV.

88 MERCEDES 609, coach spec, 21 seats

88 VOLVO B10 DUPL, 320, 57 recliners.

88 MERC 23, coach spec.

88 MERC 12, diesel, psv, swb.

88 MERC 609, coach spec, 23 seats.

88 TRANSIT, diesel, 11 psv, swb.

88 F MERCEDES 709, 21 seat, coach spec.

88 FREIGHT ROVER, 16, diesel, PSV coach spec.

88 TRANSIT 12, petrol, tested

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86 VOLVO B9, 32 + standees, PSV side seats Plaxton

86 VOLVO B9, 38 + 18 PSV Plaxton, coach seats

86 SETRA DOUBLE DECK, exc

86 PLAXTON 4000, DOUBLE DECK, exc, Gardner engine

86 VOLVO B10 PLAXTON 3200, 53, tested, v tidy.

86 IVECO, service, 19 + standees.

86 SCANIA PLAXTON 4000, d/door, 71 seats, manual.

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82 BEDFORD PLAXTON 29, p door.

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79 FORD, 35 seat, Duplie II, Turbo 6 speed.

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1987 OPTARE CITY PACER, Volkswagen diesel, bus spec, 25 seater.
1986 MERCEDES 608D, Reeve Burgess conversion, 20 bus seats, MoT 09.12.96.
1986 SETRA S228D, Double Deck Coach, 74 reclining seats, crew seat, toilet, water boiler, video, monitors. Available immediately. Dateless registration plate.
1986 BEDFORD YMPs, Plaxton Paramount 3200, 35 passenger seats and 2 tables. MoT 18.06.96. Express doors.
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1985 SETRA 215HD, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, video and monitor, water boiler, one owner from new. Available immediately.
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1982 VAN HOOL ACRON, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, continental door, centre sunken toilet, Frenze boiler, single monitor and video. Long MoT.
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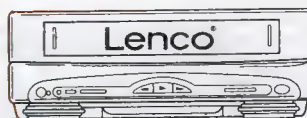
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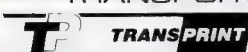
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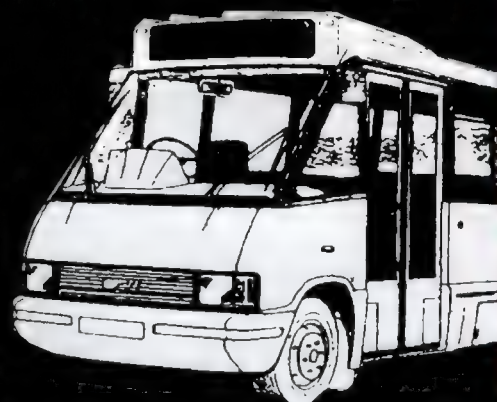
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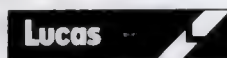
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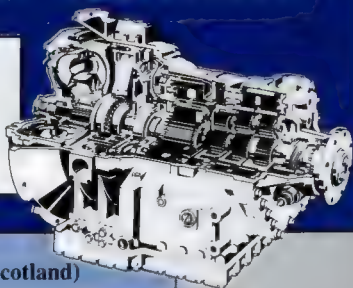
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WTH338M	1973	Leyland	25.11.96	Derwent	51
HNU125N	1975	Leyland	06.03.96	Duple	53
KWN815P	1976	Leyland	22.11.96	Plaxton	53 National seats
NTD118K	1972	Leyland	10.10.96	Pennine	51
FCY281W	1981	Bedford	16.08.96	Duple	45
FCY282W	1981	Bedford	Expired	Duple	Body Spares only
794YKM	1977	Leyland	Aug '96	Plaxton	53

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D129LTA	1986	Dodge	July '96	Reeve Burgess	23+6 Standee
D136LTA	1986	Dodge	Aug '96	Reeve Burgess	23+6 Standee
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9309ML	1984	DAF	27.03.96	Caetano	50 + WC
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PBC113G	1969	Leyland	31.05.96		74
HGD869L	1973	Leyland	15.08.96	Walter Alexander	75
FUS169L	1973	Leyland	03.10.96	Walter Alexander	74
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(61801/APP)

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(61751/TEN)

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(61722/APP)

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(61452/APP)

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Coach and Bus Week ending 27 January 1996

Say you saw it in **CBW**

▼ Coach and Bus

Betts to succeed Ashford

SCOTTISH traffic commissioner **Michael Betts** CBE has succeeded Air Vice Marshal **Ron Ashford** as senior traffic commissioner.

Air Vice Marshal Ashford is to retire in May (*CBW*, 20 January) but his replacement as Western traffic commissioner has yet to be announced.

Mr Betts, 57, became traffic commissioner for Scotland in November 1992, after a career in the Army. He is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport and the Institute of Logistics. He will continue in his role as Scottish traffic commissioner.

▼ Coach

Former Badgerline man is Thamesway's new md

Barrett plans further growth for company

by Mark Williams

FIRSTBUS man **Alan Barrett** has taken the reins of subsidiary Thamesway, in Essex, as its new managing director.

The former managing director of Red Admiral and Portsmouth Citybus had been working more recently as Badgerline's regional director at Bristol, before joining Thamesway at Hadleigh.

"In the bus industry, it is important to be seen by our cus-

tomers and our colleagues to be moving with the times," said Mr Barrett. "I look forward to further developing Thamesway, enhancing its service to customers and identifying opportunities for further growth throughout South Essex and London." Mr Barrett's career in passenger transport began in 1975 at Hants & Dorset Motor Services,



Alan Barrett: looking forward before his promotion to depot manager of Wilts & Dorset, in Salisbury. In 1984, he had a spell as traffic manager at Cambus.

He takes over from **Bill Hiron**, now md at Eastern Counties, in Norwich (*CBW*, 13 January).



▼ Coach and Bus

Scania PR man goes it alone

SCANIA'S PR man for the last 10 years, **Phil Sampson**, has set up on his own. His new company, Albany Communications, will continue Mr Sampson's involvement

with Scania, however, but will be providing communications skills including PR and graphic design for a wide range of new clients from the heavy vehicle

industry. Albany Communications — a partnership of Mr Sampson and his wife, Caroline — is based at Leighton Buzzard. **CBW**



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YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

	(Tick one only)
Owner/Director	<input type="checkbox"/> 01
Senior/General Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> 02
Engineering/Service Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> 03
Other. (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> 01
Coach Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> 05
Coach & Bus Operator	<input type="checkbox"/> 02

Local Government	<input type="checkbox"/> 03
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

	(Tick all that apply)
	Buses Coaches
1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 01 <input type="checkbox"/> 10
6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 02 <input type="checkbox"/> 11
11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 03 <input type="checkbox"/> 12
16-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 04 <input type="checkbox"/> 13
26-39	<input type="checkbox"/> 05 <input type="checkbox"/> 14
40-100	<input type="checkbox"/> 06 <input type="checkbox"/> 15
101-400	<input type="checkbox"/> 07 <input type="checkbox"/> 16
401-1000	<input type="checkbox"/> 08 <input type="checkbox"/> 17
1000 +	<input type="checkbox"/> 09 <input type="checkbox"/> 18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/purchase and/or specification of the following?

	(Tick all that apply)
	Pur Spec Rec
Vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/> 01 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> 23
Parts/Spares	<input type="checkbox"/> 02 <input type="checkbox"/> 13 <input type="checkbox"/> 24
Oil/Fuel	<input type="checkbox"/> 03 <input type="checkbox"/> 14 <input type="checkbox"/> 25
Breakdown	<input type="checkbox"/> 04 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 26
Insurance/Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> 05 <input type="checkbox"/> 16 <input type="checkbox"/> 27
Fuel Cards	<input type="checkbox"/> 06 <input type="checkbox"/> 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 28
Training	<input type="checkbox"/> 07 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	<input type="checkbox"/> 08 <input type="checkbox"/> 19 <input type="checkbox"/> 30
Ferry Crossing	<input type="checkbox"/> 09 <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 31
Hotel Bookings	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 21 <input type="checkbox"/> 32
Theatre Tickets	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 22 <input type="checkbox"/> 33
Other. (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 34

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

	(Tick all that apply)
Private Hire	<input type="checkbox"/> 01
Day Excursions	<input type="checkbox"/> 02
British Tours	<input type="checkbox"/> 03
European Tours	<input type="checkbox"/> 04
Local Government Contracts	<input type="checkbox"/> 05
Emergency/Breakdown Services	<input type="checkbox"/> 06

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